THE

HISTORY

OF THE

Seven Wiſe Maſters

OF

ROME.

Now newly Corrected, better Explained in many places, and Enlarged with many pretty Pictures, lively expreſſing the full

HISTORY.

LONDON,
Printed for *George Conyers* in *Little Britain*, 1693.

To the Reader.

FOR thy better delight, and more plainly to ſet forth the Hiſtory to thy view, I have to my great coſt added many Pictures, lively expreſſing the moſt material Points of mine. If I may receive thy Thanks, I think it a ſufficient Reward. The Hiſtory of it ſelf is both Ancient and Moral, and containeth in it much Learning

When Ignorance having a thick and dull Ear, blinded moſt People, Men are compelled to draw the rude multitude to Attention of good Inſtruction by ſuch pleaſing Allurements of Tales and Fables, as in this Book is ſet down; that as the mind is fed and delighted with the ſweetneſs of Fabulous Stories, the Soul it ſelf at the end (by often taſting the ſame Nouriſhment) grows quicker-ſighted; to behold the hidden and Myſtical Wiſdom contained under ſuch cloſe Riddles. For in few words, to give you the meaning of this Moral, is thus; The Emperor may ſignifie the World, who having but one only Son, (who is Man) him to bring well up is all his care. But Man loſing his own Mother, (who is Reaſon or Divine Grace) falling into the hand of the Step-

mother, (ſignifying *Sin*) who is an Empreſs o great bewitching, and one that commands th World: She works by all poſſible means the con fuſion of Man, and would prevail againſt his weak neſs, but that a Star from Heaven, (by which i meant Goodneſs from above) inſtructs Man how t avoid the allurements of Sin, by not opening hi mouth to bid her welcom. And the better t prevent her miſchief, he hath *Seven Wiſe Maſter* which are the Seven Liberal Sciences, to give hi wholeſom Inſtructions, and by thoſe helps ſave hi from mortal danger. So that being thus armed Man liveth to batter down Sin, (figured in th death of the Empreſs and her Minion) and in th end to gain a Rich Crown of Glory and Happi neſs, ſet ready for all thoſe that in this Life labou to attain to Heaven by doing well.

This is the Explanation of the Moral; of whi if thou make right uſe, it will be a rich Banqu to thy Soul. Farewel.

Here Beginneth the

HISTORY

OF THE

Seven Wiſe Maſters of *Rome*.

Containing many Pleaſant and Witty Narrations, very delightful to Read.

The Entrance into the Moral, (which according to things of Commick Pleaſure) properly begins with a Funeral.

SOmetime in the City of Rome there was a Famous Emperor named Pontianus, a man of great wiſdom, he took to his wife a King's Daughter that was very fair and amiable, to all people gracious, and to her Husband right dear: ſhe conceived by him, and was delivered of a Son named Dioclesian. The Child grew apace, and of all people was beloved: and when he was of the age of ſeven years, his Mother the Empreſs falling ſick, and feeling her ſelf that ſhe might not live, ſent after her Lord the Emperor (being rode forth on Progreſs) a Meſſenger, that he ſhould return without tarrying, if ever he would ſee her alive.

And when he was come, ſhe ſaid unto him, O my dear Lord, of this Sickneſs I may not eſcape,

wherefore the natural and tender Love and Car
that is to me, towards you and your Son make
a ſuit to you before my death. He replyed, deſir
what you will, I ſhall not deny you any thing
Then ſaid ſhe, after my death you will take ano
ther Wife, as is moſt convenient: wherefore, I
beſeech you, that the other my Son have no power
but that he be nouriſhed far from her, and trained
up in learning. The Emperor anſwered my moſt
dear Wife, your Petition in all things ſhall b
performed. Then turned the Empreſs and gave
up the Ghoſt. Many days after, the Emperor be
wailed her death, and long after ſhewed his heavi
neſs, and would in no wiſe be joyful.

How the Emperor committed and delivered hi
Son to Seven Wiſe Maſters to be inſtructed i
Learning.

UPon a time as the Emperor lay in his Bed
he thought himſelf inwardly of his Son, ſay

ing in his Heart, I have but one only Son, the which shall be my Heir: it is good while he is young, that he is set to learn Cunning and Wisdom, by which he may after my death govern and rule the Empire; intimating thereby, that a worthy Prince taking upon him too great a Weight and Charge, as the Government, or a Kingdom, ought first to learn to be his own Governour, and to master his own Affections. So that when he was early risen up from his Bed, he caused to be called the Lords of his Council before him, and of them took Advice what were best therein to be done. And they answered, Lord, in Rome are seven Wise Masters, who live in very great fame for their Excellency in Arts, grave Counsel, and Instructions; let them be sent for, and deliver them your Son to be fostered and instructed in Learning. The Emperor understanding that, sent his Letters made powerful by his own Seal, to the Seven Wise Masters, that they should come to him without delay: they anon came before the Emperor, and he demanded of them, if they knew wherefore he had sent for them? they answered, The cause is as your will intendeth, we know not, but if it please you to shew us your mind, we be ready to fulfil it to the utmost of our Powers. To whom the Emperor said, I have but one Son, which I shall deliver to you to confirm in all good ways of Learning and Vertue, so that by your doctrine and wisdom, he may more wisely govern the Empire after my decease.

The first Master named Pontillas, said, Lord de-

liber me your Son, and I ſhall teach him as much cunning within ſeven years, as I and all my fellows can.

Then ſpake the ſecond Maſter, named Lentulus, Sir, of long time, I have ſerved you, and hitherto have had no reward. I demand nothing of you, but that you deliver me your Son to govern, and I ſhall make him as cunning within ſix years as I, and all my fellows.

The third Maſter named Craton, ſaid, my Lord, many times I have bæn with you on the Sea, in peril of my life, and have had no manner of reward: if I might for my recompence, obtain that you would vouchſafe to commit your Son under my Governance, I ſhould inform him as much within five years, if his wit will thereto attain, as I and all my fellows can.

Then ſtood up the fourth Maſter, named Malquidrack, who was right lean of Body, and ſaid, my

Lord,

Lord, remember I and all my Predeceſſors have ſerved Emperors, and received no reward, wherefore I ask no other thing, but that you deliver me your Son to teach, and I ſhall make him take as much Science and Wiſdom within four years as I and all my fellows have learned in all our lives.

Then ſpake the fifth Maſter, that was named Joſephus: Lord, I am old, and many times am called to your Council, and you know that my Counſel hath profited you, and ſo likewiſe may I do hereafter: Yet I deſire no more, but that you deliver me your Son, and I ſhall inſtruct him in as much Cunning and Science, that he within three years ſhall be prompt in Wit, as much as I and all my fellows have.

Then came the ſixth Maſter named Cleophes, who ſaid like to the other, promiſing to inform the Child in all their Cunning in two years.

The ſeventh Maſter alſo deſired the Child, and promiſed to learn him within one year, the Sciences and Wiſdom of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperor ſaid, My truſty Friends, I am very much bound to thank you all, and every one of you, for that you have ſo earneſtly deſir'd to foſter and inſtruct my Son: If I ſhould now commit him to one and not to another, thereupon would enſue much diſſention among you: Therefore to you all, and every of you, I commit my Son to be nouriſhed and taught. The Maſters hearing this, expreſſing both their greatneſs of joy, and forwardneſs in will to the Emperor,

tor, all with one harmony of consent received h
Son, and led him towards the Court of Rome. U
on the way, spake Craton to his Fellows; if w
this Child should teach within the City of Rom
there is so great resort and concourse of People, tha
it would hinder him in Learning; I know a fai
place from Rome some two miles, right pleasan
and delectable, there let us make a foursquar
Chamber of Stone, and put him therein; and up
on the Walls thereof, let us paint and write th
seven liberal Arts, so that the Child all times ma
see and behold his Doctrine therein as well as i
his Book. This advice pleased them all, and wa
done accordingly in every point: the Masters dili-
gently every day, during seven years, taught and in-
structed the Child, and determined among them-
seleves, and said, it is good that we examine our Dis-
ciple, to see at what perfection our pains hath ar-
rived, and what strength and growth his vertue and
knowledge is come to; and they all wisely and Re-
ligiously accorded to that counsel: then said Master
Pontillas, how shall we prove him? Craton said, let
every one of us as he sleepeth, put under every cor-
ner of his Bed an Olive-leaf, and then we shall
know if he perceived or felt any thing, or not: this
done, he awaking, greatly marvelled and lifted up
his eyes towards the roof of the Chamber fervently.
The Masters seeing that, said, wherefore lift
you up your Eyes so sharply? he answered, it is
no marvel; for in my sleep I saw the uppermost
part of my Chamber inclined towards the earth, or
else under me it was lifted up: the Masters hear-
ing

ing this, said amongst themselves, if this Child live he shall be a Man of great Cunning and Fame.

How the Emperor by the Counsel of the great Princes and Lords of his Empire wedded another Wife.

THe Princes and great Lords of the Empire in the mean time, came to the Emperor and said my Lord, ye have only one Son, it is possible he might die, therefore it were profitable that you would wed another Wife, that thereby your joys and hopes may be held with far more certainty and assured happiness in your Race and Issue, to the intent, that the Empire of Rome be not left without an Heir. Moreover, you are so mighty, that if it should happen you to get many Children, you may promote and advance them all to great Dignities and Lordships. Whereupon answered the Emperor, it is your Counsel, that I shall take another Wife: then seek me one that is gracious, a pure Virgin, fair and gentle born, and then I shall follow your counsel and advice. They went and sought and search'd out many Kingdoms and Countries; and at the last they found the King's Daughter of Castile, that was right fair and beautiful, and her they gave the Emperor to Wife; who behaved her self so well, that anon he was so greatly taken in her love, that he forgot all the sorrow of heart he had taken for the death of his first Wife. And when they had lived long together without any Children, and when the Empress saw that she might not Conceive, when she heard the Emperor had a Son with the Seven Wise Masters, to be fostered and taught, to the great good and pro-

fit

fit of the Empire, she thought in her self, and wished his death, and from that very hour imagined how she might conspire his destruction. It happened on a Night as the Emperor lay in his bed, he said unto the Empress: My most dear and best beloved Wife, I shall now open to you the secrets of my heart, for under the Sun there is no Creature that I love so well as you, and therefore trust in my love.

Then said the fair Empress, if it be so as you say, I require of you one Boon or Petition. Desire what you will said the Emperor, and all that in me is possible, I shall fulfil and give it you. Then said the Empress, my dear Lord, you know I have no Child by you yet conceived, for which I am sore pensive and heavy; but Fame, that never conceals it self long to true joy, hath deliver'd this happy truth to me, that you have one Son only, the which is set to the Seven Wise Masters to be taught and govern'd, and him I hold and require for my own Son: wherefore I beseech you send for him, that I may see him, and have consolation of his presence, as though he were mine own. Hereupon answered the Emperor, it is fifteen years past since I saw him, your will shall be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperor sent unto the Seven Wise Masters a Letter, seal'd with his secret Sign, that upon pain of death they should bring his Son in the feast of Penticost following.

How the Seven Wise Masters after the sight of the Emperor's Letter, would first observe the course and divine foreshewing of the Firmament, and

Planets.

Planets, whether it were good to obey his Commandments or not.

AND when the Masters by the Letter had understood the Emperor's will, in the night they went and beheld the Stars in the Firmament, whether it should be expedient to bring the Child to the Emperor or not; and they saw clearly in the Stars, that if they should lead the Child in that time assigned, at the first word he should speak, he should die an evil death: wherefore they were all very sorry: and as they beheld another Star, they saw, that if they delivered not the Child at the day aforesaid, they should lose their heads. Then said one of them, of two evils the least is to be chosen: it is better that all we die, than that the Child should lose his Life: therefore that we may save the Child's life, let us go to the Emperor. And as they were thus sorrowful, the Child came down from his

his Chamber, and seeing his masters so heavy, demanded the cause of their heavinels: whereun they answered, Sir, we have received your F thers Letters, that upon pain of death, now th high Feast of Penticost, we shall lead you to yo Country; whereupon we have beholden the Fi mament, wherein we clearly find, that if we (wit in the time prefixed) present you to your Fathe at the first word ye shall pronounce out of yo mouth, ye shall be to the most vilest death conden ned. Then said the Child, I must also beholde Firmament with the Stars: and so he did, a found clearly in a little Star, that if he could a stain from speaking seven days, he should prese and save his life. And after he had seen this, c led his Masters and shewed them the Star, a said, behold my dear Masters, I see perfectly the Star, that if I abstain my self seven days, shall save my life. Ye are now seven Masters, t wisest of all the world, it is an easie thing for you every of you for me to answer, and with you wise answer every of you his day, my life m save and keep; and in the eighth day I shall spea my self, and save my life, and all you from peril As the Masters did behold that certain Star, the thought with themselves, that the Child had sai truth, saying, Almighty God be thanked that th wisdom and cunning of our Disciple exceeded u all. Then said the first Master Pontillas, Lord I shall speak for you the first day, and save you life. And Lentullus the second Master, said, I shal for you the second day answer: and so consequent

ly every of them promiſed to anſwer for himſelf his day: and this ſaid, they cloathed the Child in Purple, leaped on horſeback with a fair company, and haſtned with the Child to the Emperor.

How the Emperor rode to meet his Son coming from Study, with Joy, Solemnity and Triumph.

When the Emperor perceived that his Son was coming on the way, he rode with great joy to meet him, and the Maſters underſtanding the coming of the Emperor, ſaid unto the Child, it is beſt that we depart, that in the mean while we may provide how we may ſave your life. The Child ſaid, it pleaſeth me well that you do ſo, but have mind of me in my neceſſity: ſo they took leave and departed towards the City, and the Child came after, accompanied moſt honourably. And as he and his Father the Emperor met, for joy he took his Son about the neck and kiſſed him,

and

and ſaid, My dear Son, now is my joy compl
behold in thæ the treaſure of my life's comfo
How is it with you, it is long ſince that I ſaw y
He bowed down his head and anſwered nothi
The Father had great wonder why he ſpake n
and thought in himſelf, that his Maſters had
ſoꝛmed him ſo, that he riding ſhould not ſpe
And when they were come into the Palace, and we
deſcended from their Hoꝛſes, the Father tok
Son by the hand and led him into the Hall, a
ſet him next him, and beheld him, and ſaid, T
me now how it is with your Maſters, How ha
they inſtructed you theſe many years ſince I ſa
you: But he bowed down his head again, a
ſpake not. The Father ſaid, Wheꝛefoꝛe ſpeak
not to me. When the Empreſs heard that the E
peroꝛ's Son was come, ſhe was right joyous, a
ſaid, I will go ſee him. She apparelled her ſ
with rich Attire and tok with her two of her G
tlewomen, and went, whereas the Emperoꝛ w
ſitting with his Son and ſet her down by the Chil
and ſhe ſaid to the Emperoꝛ, is this your Son th
hath bæn nouriſhed with the ſeven Wiſe Maſters
and he ſaid, it is my Son, but he ſpeaketh not. S
ſaid, deliver to me your Son, and if ever he ſpea
I ſhall make him. Then ſaid the Emperoꝛ, ri
and go with her: The Son did Reverence to h
Father as though he ſaid, I am ready to accom
pliſh your will; and ſo he went with her.

How the Empreſs led Dioclesian the Emperor's Son with her into a Chamber, to make good Cheer with him, the which he withſtood.

THe Empreſs led him with her into the Chamber, and commanded all others to avoid, and ſet him by her before her bed-ſide, and ſaid. O my beſt beloved Dioclesian! I have heard much of your Perſon and Beauty; but now I am glad that I may ſee that which my heart coveteth and lobeth: for I have cauſed your Father to ſend for you, that I might have ſolace and joy of your Perſon; wherefore right heartily I give you knowledge, that I for your love unto this day have kept my Virginity; ſpeak to me therefore, and let us go to bed together: But he gave her no anſwer. She ſeeing that, ſaid to him, O good Dioclesian, which hath the half of my Soul, why ſpeak ye not to me? or at leaſt ſhew me ſome token of thy love: what ſhall I do? ſpeak to me, I am ready to perform your will: and when ſhe had thus ſaid, ſhe embraced him, and would have kiſſed his mouth, but he turned his Viſage from her, and in no wiſe would conſent: then ſhe ſaid again, O Son, wherefore do you thus with me? let us ſleep together; and then ſhall ye perceive, that for your love I have kept my Virginity: but he turned his Viſage again from her; he ſeeing that, of her he was aſham'd, ſhewing unto him her naked Body and Breaſts, ſaying, Behold my Son, what Body I have, it is at your Will, a ſervant at your pleaſure: give me your conſent, or it ſhall be hard for me to depart hence in my right mind. He ſhew-

ed her no manner of love, but as much as he cou
withdrew himſelf from her. When ſhe ſaw tha
ſhe ſaid O my beſt Son, if it pleaſe you not to co
ſent unto me (yet ſpeak) perhaps for ſome reaſ
nable cauſe? Lo, here is Pen, Ink, and Pap
then write your will, whether I may at any tim
hereafter truſt in your love or not. The Chi
wrote as followeth. O Lady, God forbid tha
ſhould defile my Fathers Orchard: For I wot n
what Fruit I ſhould have of it: I know well tha
ſhould ſin greatly in the ſight of God, and alſo run
the malediction of my Father; and therefore fro
henceforth I pray you provoke me no more there

When ſhe had ſeen and read the Writing, ſ
tore it with her teeth, and rent her Cloaths
her Navel, and caſt from her all the Ornamen
of her head, and cryed with a loud voice, Co
hither my Lords and help me, leſt this rude and
vil body ſhame and raviſh me.

How the Empreſs complained to the Emperor the ſhame done unto her by his Son.

The Emperor being in the Hall and hearin
the cry of the Empreſs, haſtily run tow
her Chamber, with many of his Knights and Se
vants following him, to know the matter. Th
began the Empreſs to cry and ſpeak to the Em
peror in this wiſe: O my Lord, have pity on m
behold this young man is not your Son, but
foulleſt for Ribaldry and actions of Luxury, the
ber ſin and heat put ſtrength into: for as I
know, I led him into the Chamber, and wo

have exhorted and cauſed him to have ſpoken; I have done as much therefore as I can or may; and whilſt I moved him to have ſpoken, he hath endeavoured himſelf with me to have ſinned; and becauſe I would not conſent, but withſtood as much as I might to flie the ſame, he hath made my Viſage all bloody; and torn my Veſture and Ornaments off my Head, as you may ſee; and if you had not ſoon come unto my calling, he had ended in me his moſt foul and wicked Appetite. When the Emperor ſaw and heard this (filled with great malice and woodneſs) he commands his ſervant to lead him to the Gallows and hang him. When the Lords heard thereof they ſaid, Lord you have but this Son only, it is not good that ye thus ſlightly put him to death: The Law is ordained for Traitreſſors, and if he muſt die, let him by the Law die, leſt it be ſaid, that the Emperor in his wrath, (without Law or Juſtice) had put his only Son to death. As the Emperor heard this, he commanded him to be put in Priſon till judgment was given againſt him. When the Empreſs underſtood that the Child was not put to death, ſhe wept bitterly, and would take no reſt. When night came, the Emperor entred into his Chamber to go to bed and found his Wife ſorrowing: To whom he ſaid, O my dear Lady, for what cauſe are ye ſorrowful? She anſwered, know ye not that your accurſed Son hath done me ſo much ſhame and diſhonour, that you commanded him to be hanged, and yet he liveth, and your word is not perfor-

med, nor my ſhame revenged: to morrow ſaid

the Emperor he ſhall die by the Law: then ſaid ſhe, ſhall he ſo long live? Then might it happen to you as it did to a Burgeſs of Rome, of whom an Example is mentioned: the Emperor ſaid, I pray you ſhew me this Example: that ſhall I gladly ſays the Empreſs.

The firſt Example of the Empreſs.

IN the City of Rome was a Burgeſs, which had a fair Garden, wherein he had a noble Tree the which every year brought forth fruit of ſuch vertue for whoſoever eat thereof that were ſick of any manner of Sickneſs, or Leproſie, he ſhould ſoon be whole, and receive light.

It happned on a day, as the Burgeſs went into the Garden to viſit the Tree, he eſpied under the Tree a fair young Imp and called to him the Gardiner, and ſaid, my friend, of this young Imp I will have thee charge, for I truſt of that to plant a better Tree than this is. The Gardiner ſaid, I ſhall

gladly do. Another time the Burgeſs came again into the Garden to viſit the young Plant, and it appeared unto him that it grew not ſo much as it ſhould do; and he ſaid to the Gardiner; how may this be; and he ſaid it is no wonder, for this great Trœ hath ſo great Arms and Branches, that the air may not come to the root of the young Trœ; then ſaid the Burgeſs, cut and hew off the Arms and the Boughs, that the air may come thereto. The Gardiner did as he commanded. The Burgeſs came again another time to ſee the young Plant, and thought that it grew never the better, and ſaid to the Gardiner, what is it that letteth not this Plant to grow now? and he ſaid, I ſuppoſe the height of the old Trœ letteth the Sun, that the Rain may not come thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then ſaid the Maſter unto him, hew down that Tree to the ground, for I hope of this Plant to have a better than ever this was.. The Gardiner hearing his Maſter, hewed down the Tree, and as ſoon as this was done, the young Plant periſhed, and came to nought: wherefore there came great harm; for when the poor ſick people perceived that the Tree was deſtroyed (they curſed all them that were Counſellors and helpers thereto) by the which they were oftentimes healed and cured of their Infirmities: Then ſaid the Empreſs to her Lord, underſtand ye what I have ſaid? he anſwered, yea right well: Then ſaid ſhe, I will declare the meaning of that I have ſaid.

The Declaration of the Example.

This Træ, my Lord, betokeneth your ma Noble Perſon, how that with your counſ and help, many poꝛ and ſick folks are greatl comfoꝛted; and the young Imp which is grow under the great Træ, is your accurſed Son, th now by cunning beginneth to grow, and ſtudie firſt how he might cut off the Arms and Bough of your might, and how to win him the Land, an favour of the people, yea and moꝛe unnaturall imagineth to deſtroy your perſon, that he m himſelf reign; but what ſhall then enſue there All poꝛ and feeble people ſhall curſe them w might have deſtroyed your Son, and have not done it: Theꝛefoꝛe I counſel you, while you in power, that you deſtroy him, leſt the curſe the people fall upon you. Then ſaid the Em roꝛ, ye have given me good counſel, to moꝛrow ſhall condemn him to the vileſt death that can thought upon. When the day was, the Em roꝛ went and ſat in Judgment, and command his Servants to lead his Son to be hanged, w Trumpets ſounding in token of death. As Emperoꝛs Son was led through the City, the co mon people began to weep and cry, Alas the Son of the Emperoꝛ is led towards his dea And therewithal came Pantillas the firſt Ma riding upon a Hoꝛſe. When the Child ſaw h he bowed his head, as though he ſaid, mind when you come before my Father: ſee how I led towards the Gallows. Then the Maſter to the Servants: Make no haſte, foꝛ I hope,

the Grace of God, this day to deliver him from death. Then said all the people, O good Master, hast you to the Palace, and leave your Disciple; he smote his Horse with his Spurs, till he came to the Palace, and knæl'd to the Emperor, and did him reverence. To whom the Emperor said: It shall never be to thee good; who answered, I have deserved a better Reward. The Emperor said, thou lyest; for I delivered my Son to thee well mannered, and now he is brought home dumb, and hath sought to work his will, to the shame of my vertuous Empress, and the dishonour of his Fathers Bed for ever; therefore this day shall he die; and ye shall die a shameful death. Then said the Master, Lord, forasmuch as your Son speaketh not, the cause whereof God knoweth, and without cause it is not, as you shall understand; and whereas you say, that he would have committed the sin of enforcement on your Empress, I shall say to you of a truth, he hath been in our Company to the space of sixteen years, and we never could perceive such abuse by him: Therefore my dear Lord, I shall shew you one thing, that if you put your Son to death for the words of your Wife, it shall happen to you worse than to a Knight that killed his best Grey-hound (through the words of his Wife) which saved his Son from death. Then said the Emperor to the Master tell me that Example: The Master said, Lord that shall I not do, for before I shall end, your Son might be dead, and then without hope shall I rehearse it: but if it please you this noble Example to hear, call again

your Son till to morrow; and as you think by rea-
ſon, then do with him your pleaſure. As th
Emperor heard that, anon he willed the Child
be called again: and in the mean time he ſent hi
to priſon, while the Maſter finiſhed his Tale; an
then began in this manner following.

The firſt Example of the firſt Maſter.

THere was a valiant Knight had one only So
as you have, which he loved ſo much th
he ordained for his Keepers three Nouriſhers; th
firſt ſhould give him ſuck, and feed him, the ſe
cond, waſh him, and keep him clean; and th
third ſhould bring him to his ſleep and reſt. Th
Knight had alſo a Grey-hound and a Faulcon
which he alſo loved right well. The Grey-hou
was ſo good, that he never ran at any Game, bu
he took it, and held it till his Maſter came. An
if his Maſter was diſpoſed to go to any Battle, i
he could not ſpeed therein, anon as he ſhou
mount his Horſe, the Grey-hound would take hi
Horſe-tail in his mouth, and draw backward, an
cry and howl marvellouſly loud. By theſe ſigns
and the obſervations thereof, the Knight did alway
underſtand that his journey ſhould have very ill ſu
ceeſs. The Falcon was ſo gentle and hardy, that
was never caſt off to his prey, but he took it.

The ſame Knight had great pleaſure in Juſtin
and Tourney, ſo that upon a time, under his C
ſile he proclaimed a Tournament, to the whi
came many great Lords and Knights. The Knig
entred into the Tourney, and his Lady went wi
her Maidens to ſee it, and as they went out, aft
wer

went the Nourishers, and left the Child lying in the Cradle in the Hall, where the Grey hound lay near the wall, and the Hawk or Falcon standing upon a Pearch. In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, to all them of the Castle unknown, which when he perceived they were all absent, he put his head out of his hole, and when he saw none but the Child in the Cradle, he went out of his hole towards the Cradle to have slain the Child.

The Noble Falcon perceiving that, and beholding the Grey-hound that was sleeping, made such rustling with her Wings, that the Grey-hound awaked and rose up; and when he saw the Serpent near the Child, anon against him he leaped, and they both fought so long, that the Serpent had grievously wounded the Grey-hound, that he bled so sore, that the earth about the Cradle was bloody. The Grey-hound, when he felt himself grievously wounded, starts fiercely upon the Serpent, and

and fought ſo ſore, and eagerly, that betwixt them the Cradle was overtoſt, with the Child, the bottom upward, and the Cradle having four pummels, which it fell upon, they ſaved the Child from having any hurt: what can be more expreſt to make good the wonder in this preſervation of the Child? with great pain the Grey-hound ſlew the Serpent, laid him down again in his place, and licked his wounds. Anon after, as the Juſts and Tourney was done, the Nouriſhers came firſt into the Caſtle, and ſaw the Cradle turned the up-ſide-down upon the earth, compaſſed round about with blood, and the Grey-hound alſo bloody, and ſaid among themſelves, that the Grey-hound had ſlain the Child, and were not ſo wiſe to turn up the Cradle again with the Child, to ſee what was befallen: and ſaid, let us run away, leſt that our Maſter ſhould lay the blame upon us and ſlay us. Running away, they met the Knights wife, and ſhe ſaid unto them, wherefore make ye this ſorrow, and whither will you run? Then they ſaid, O Lady, woe be to us, and to you! Why ſaid ſhe, what is happened, ſhew me: The Grey-hound they ſaid, that our Lord and Maſter loved ſo well, hath devoured and ſlain your Son, and lieth by the wall full of blood. As the Lady heard this, ſhe preſently fell to the earth, and began to weep piteouſly, and ſaid, Alas! O my dear Son are ye thus ſlain? What ſhall I now do, that I have mine only Son thus loſt? Herewithall came in the Knight from the Tourney, beholding his Lady crying, he demanded wherefore ſhe made ſo great lamentation? She

anſwered

anſwered: O my Lord, the Grey-hound you loved ſo much, hath ſlain your only Son, and lieth by the Wall ſatiated with the blood of the Child. The Knight exceeding angry went into the Hall; the Grey-hound aroſe to meet him, and did fawn upon him as he was wont: But the Knight drew out his Sword, and with one ſtroke ſmote of the Grey-hounds head; then he went to the Cradle where the Child lay, and found his Son whole, and by the Child the Serpent lay ſlain; and by divers ſigns, perceived the Grey-hound had killed the Serpent for the defence of the Child. Then with great ſorrow he tore his hair, and ſaid, Wo is me, that for the words of my wife I have ſlain my beſt Grey-hound, which hath ſaved my Childs life, and ſlain the Serpent; therefore I will put my ſelf to penance, and ſo he brake his Sword in three pieces, and went towards the Holy-Land, and abode there all the days of his life. Then ſaid the Maſter to the Emperor, Lord underſtand ye what I have ſaid? and he anſwered, right well. The Maſter, ſaid, if you put your Son to death for the words of your Wife, it ſhall happen to you worſe than it did to the Knight for his Grey-hound. The Emperor ſaid, you have ſhewn me a fair Example: without doubt this day my Son ſhall not die. Then ſaid the Maſter, if you do ſo, you do wiſely, and I thank you, that you have ſpared him this day for my ſake.

The ſecond Complaint of the Empreſs: A ſorrow mingled with much cunning and falſehood.

WHen the Empreſs heard the Child was not yet dead, ſhe began to weep bitterly, and ſat her down on the earth in aſhes, and would not lift up her head. When the Emperor heard that he entred the Chamber, and ſaid unto her, O good Wife, wherefore make you all this ſorrow, and trouble your ſelf ſo much? She ſaid ask ye that of me, know ye not what ſhame I have ſuffered by your unhappy Son, and ye have promiſed me, that you would ſee juſtice to be thereupon executed on him and yet he liveth? Of a truth it will happen to you as to a Shepherd and a Boar. The Emperor ſaid I pray you ſhew me that Example for my learning: ſhe ſaid, yeſterday I ſhewed you one, and ſaw no good effect that came thereof: To what end ſhall I now do the like? Nevertheleſs I ſhall declare this noble Example unto you, as hereafter you ſhall hear.

The ſecond Example of the Empreſs.

THere was ſometime an Emperor which had a great Forreſt, wherein was a wild Boar ſo cruel and fierce, that he devoured Men going through the Forreſt. The Emperor therefore being right heavy, proclaimed through his Dominions, That whoſoever could ſlay the Boar, ſhould have his only Daughter to his Wife, and the Empire after his death. As this was in all places proclaimed, there was not one man found that durſt

give the adventure. But there was a Shepherd, who thought in himself, might I the Boar overcome and slay, I should not only advance my self, but also my generation and kindred. So he took his Shepherds Staff in his hand, went to the Forest; and as the Boar had of him a sight, he drew towards the Herdsman, but he for fear, climbed into a Tree, and then the Boar began to bite and gnaw the Tree, so that the Herd thought shortly he would have overthrew it. This Tree was loaden

with plenty of fruit,, and the Herd gathered thereof, and cast them to the Boar, insomuch that when he was filled therewith, he laid him down to sleep: which when the Herd perceived, he by little and little descended the Tree, and with the one hand slawed the Boar, and with the other held him about the Tree, and seeing the Boar slept very soundly, drawing out his knife, smote the Boar to the heart, and

killed

killed him, and shortly after wedded the Empe-
rors Daughter, and after the death of her Father,
he was made Emperor. Then said, she my Lord
wot ye not what I have said? he said, right well:
Then said she, this mighty Boar betokeneth your
most noble Person, against whom may no man
withstand, neither by Wisdom nor Strength. The
Shepherd with his staff, to the Person of your
ungracious Son, who with his Staff of cunning,
beginneth to play with you, as the Headsman
clawed the Boar, made him sleep, and after killed
him. In the same manner the Masters of your
Son, by those false Fables and Narrations claw
you, and glose with you, until your Son slay you,
that he may reign. Then said the Emperor, God
forbid they should do to me as he did to the wild
Boar; and he said unto her, this day my Son shall
die: and she answered, if you do so, then do ye
wisely. Then the Emperor the second time sit-
ting in Judgment, commanded to lead him to the
place of Execution appointed for that purpose.
Whilst he was going, the second Master said:
O my Lord and Emperor, if you should slay your
Son for the words of your Wife, it shall happen
worse to you than it did a certain Knight which for
the words of his Wife was unjustly put upon the
Pillory. The Emperor said, O good Master tell
me how that happened: And he said, My Lord, I
shall not say it, unless you will call your only Son
from the death, untill the Example be told, which
if it turn not you from your purpose, then your
will be fulfilled; then the Emperor commanded the

Child ſhould be called again: and after this manner following, the ſecond Maſter began to tell.

The Example of the ſecond Maſter.

IN a City was an ancient Knight, which wedded a young wife, and fair, as you have done, whom he loved above all earthly things: The Knight was a very circumſpect and careful Husband, inſomuch that every night he locked the doꝛ with his own hands, and laid the keys under his beds-head. In that City was a Law oꝛ Cuſtom, that a certain hour in the night, a Bell was uſed to be rung, that after the ringing of the ſaid Bell, if any man oꝛ woman were by the Watch-men found about the Stræts, all that night they ſhould be kept in Pꝛiſon, and on the moꝛrow ſet upon the Pilloꝛy, that all people might behold them.

The ſaid Knight had litle luſt of fleſhly dæd, to perfoꝛm the deſires and appetite of his young Wife; wheꝛefoꝛe every night ſhe having a Paramour, her Husband ſlæping took the keys from under his beds-head and went to her Love, and when ſhe came again, laid the keys under her Husbands head: and thus they played many a time.

It happened upon a night, that the Knight awaked from his ſlæp, and milled his wife, and the keys from his Beds-head, wheꝛeupon he roſe up, and went unto the doꝛs, and found them open the which he bolted faſt within, and went up again into his Chamber, and loked out of the window towards the ſtræt, and when it was near the third Cocks Crow, his Wife came from her beloved, and found the doꝛ ſhut and bolted within,

then was she sorrowful; Nevertheless knocked
have come in. Then spake the Knight out of
Window, O thou most wicked and unclean Wi
now I know that many times thou hast forsak
my Bed,, and gone and done adultery; now th
shalt stand until the Bell be rung, that the Wat
men may take thee, and do with thee according
the Law. His Wife answer'd, my Lord, why
you lay that to me? For in very truth, the ca
of my being abroad was for no ill, but I was
my Mother's Maid fetched in the night, and wh
I saw you sleep so sweetly, I durst not awake y
because you are old, and therefore I took the ke
and went to my Mother who is sore sick, that
fear to morrow she must be anointed, or annih
lated: Notwithstanding, because I would not
offend, I have hasted again unto you, and have
her lying in great pain; therefore I pray you
the love of God, let me in before the Bell ringe
The Knight answered, you shall not come in,
must abide there until the Bell ringeth, and
til the Watchmen come and take you: then
she, that would be to you, and to me, and u
all our friends and kindred a great shame, therefo
for the Reverence of Almighty God, let me
Then said he, have in thy mind, evil and fa
Wife, how oftentimes thou hast forsaken my Be
and done Adultery: it is much better thou sh
shame, and bewail for thy sins here in the Wo
from an to suffer pain in Hell. She said again
if it m, I pray you for the love of him that was
will fi'd, and died on the Cross, have mercy on

The Knight said thou labourest in vain, for thou shalt tarry the coming of the Watch-men. She hearing that said, My Lord, ye know by this door standeth a Well, if you let me not come in, I shall here drown my self, rather than all my friends should be ashamed for me: Then said he, would to God thou hadst been drowned long before thou camest in my Bed. As they thus spake, the Moon went down, and all was very dark: Then if, said she, it will be no otherwise, I shall drown my self; but yet before, like a true Christian Woman, I shall make my Testament: First, I bequeath to God my soul, and my body to be buried in the Church of St. Peter: and all other things and goods that God hath lent me, I give you, to dispose for my

soul after your discretion. And when she had thus said, she went unto the Well, and there lying a great stone, with both her Arms she lifted up and said,

Now I drown my self, and so cast the stone dow
into the Well, and went again privily and stood
the dor. The Knight hearing the noise, cryed w
a very loud voice, Alas, alas! my swæt Wife
drowned, and hastily came down, and ran to
Well. And when she saw the dor open, presen
she entred, and locked the dor, and went up into
Chamber, and lay and looked out of the Windo
The Knight stood by the Well, and wept bitter
and said, wo to me, I have now lost my best
loved Wife: cursed be the time that I made
this door against her. When the Lady heard th
she said, O thou cursed and old Greysard, why sta
est thou here at this time of the night? was n
my body sufficient? wherefore do you go thus e
ry night to your Harlots and leave my bed? as
heard the voice of his Wife, he was right glad
said, Blessed be God that yet she is not drowned
But my good Lady, wherefore do you lay s
things against me? I thought to have chastis
you, and therefore I locked the door, but in
wise I intended to your peril: ye knew well wh
sorrow I made for you, when I heard you fall in
the Well, and therefore I came, thinking to ha
helped you. Whereupon she said, thou liest, I
ber committed such faults as thou layest to m
but it appeareth by a common Proverb, he that
guilty or culpable himself of a sin, judgeth eve
man to be in the same; or else, the Father ne
sought the Son in the Oven, except he had be
therein himself. In like case conceivest thou
false surmise of me: But one thing I promise th

thou ſhalt abide there till the Watch-men come, and the Bell be rung, that they may lead thee before the Judges, to abide and ſuffer the Law. Then ſaid the Knight, wherefore lay you ſuch things to me that am old impotent, and unmeet to delight in ſuch a Game? I have dwelt long in this City, and never was defamed, therefore let me in, that to me or your ſelf you do no ſhame. She ſaid, ye ſay in vain, it is better you fore-think your ſins in this World than in Hell: Have in mind what the Wiſe Man ſaith, A Poor man Proud, a Rich man a Lyar, and an Old man a fool, God hateth: ſo be you a Fool and Rich. What need you to ſlander me: cannot you be content when ye have the flower of my youth at your pleaſure, but you muſt run to Harlots: and therefore it is the great grace of God, that you have time to forethink it, leſt you ſhould be damned for more ſins; therefore ſuffer ſome penance patiently. The Knight ſaid, O my beſt beloved Lady, although it be ſo, God is merciful, and asketh nothing of a ſinner, but that he amend his life. and do penance for his ſins: Now let me in, and I will make amends. She ſaid, What Devil made you ſo good a Preacher? but yet you come not in. As they thus ſpake, the Bell rung: then he intreated very fervently, ſaying, now ſuffer me to come in, that I be not aſhamed for ever. She anſwered, The ringing of the Bell doth portend the health of your ſoul. And as this was ſaid, preſently came the Watchmen about the City, and found the Knight ſtanding in the ſtreet, and ſaid to him, O good man, it is not good that

ye ſtand here in this hour of the night. As ſ
heard this voice of the Watch-men, ſhe ſaid, G
Fellows avenge me on that old accurſed Wh
hunter; for ye know whoſe Daughter I am; th
accurſed old man is wont every night to leave
Bed, and go to his Whores; I have long for
him, and would not complain on him to my frien
but I truſted that he would have amended his m
rule, but it helpeth not: Therefore puniſh him
ter the Law, that all ſuch old Dotards may t
example by him. Then the Watch-men t
him, and all night chaſtiſed him in Pylon, and
the morrow put him on the Pillory. Now ſ
the Maſter to the Emperor, Lord have ye und
ſtood what I have ſaid, and he ſaid right w
Then ſaid the Maſter, if you put to death your S
by the inſtigation of your Wife, it ſhall cha
worſe unto you than to the Knight.

The Emperor ſaid, ſhe was the worſt wom
that ever I heard of, that ſo falſly brought
Husband to ſhame and rebuke: I ſay Maſter,
this Example my Son ſhall not die this day. T
Maſter ſaid unto him, if you do ſo, you do wiſ
and hereafter you ſhall joy: ſo I commit you to G
and thank you for your patient hearing, and
ring of your Son; and ſo he departed.

The third Complaint of the Empreſs, more full of cunning and ſorrow than the former.

When the Empreſs heard the Child was
dead, ſhe wept bitterly, and entred
Privy Chamber, and tore her skin with her na

and with a loud voice cryed. Alas, that ever I was born, that ſo great a Kings Daughter ſhould be thus intreated and ſhamed, and can have no remedy. Her Gentlewoman hearing this, went and ſhewed it to the Emperor, and he went unto her, and comforted her, ſaying, O Lady, weep not ſo, for it behoveth you not. Who anſwered, the love that I owe unto you, maketh me more ſorrow than the contempt of Death: for why, the inward love of your heart hath hitherto prohibited me, that I have not returned into my Countrey to my Father: but I fear, ſhould I do ſo, it might turn to your harm; for he is mighty to honour me with Riches, and to revenge my quarrel in ſuch wiſe as you might repent it. Whereunto ſaid the Emperor, let that paſs out of your mind, nor repent it any more; for as long as I live I ſhall never fail you. And ſhe ſaid, Lord, I pray God you may long live: but I fear it may happen to you, as it befell to a Knight and his Son, that would not bury his Fathers head in the Church-Yard, yet his Father died for him. Then ſaid the Emperor, ſhew me the Example, that he would not bury his Fathers head; ſhe ſaid, I ſhall do it for your profit.

The third Example of the Empreſs.

IN the City of Rome there was a Knight which had two daughters and one ſon. This Knight had ſuch a delight in Hunting, Juſting, and Tourney, that all things he might win and get in, he

ſpent thereupon. In that time lived an Empero
named Octavian, which in Riches of Gold and Sil
ver exceeded other Kings and Princes, inſomuch
that he had a Tower full of Gold, and ordained
Knight to have the kæping and charge thereof.
This Knight by Hunting, Juſting, and other idl
Games, came to ſuch great poverty, that he was
forced, out of the extremity of his adverſe For
tunes, to ſell his Heritage, and called unto him
his Son, and ſaid, my Son it behoveth me of your
counſel, for neceſſity compelleth me to ſell my He

ritage, or elſe to find ſome other way whereby I
may live; for if I ſhould ſell mine Heritage, you
and your Siſters would periſh. Then the Son ſaid,
Father, if you can find any manner of Means
without ſelling your Heritage, I ſhould be ready
to help you. The Father ſaid, I have thought on
a good counſel; The Emperor hath a great Tower
full

full of Gold; by night-time, let us with Instruments dig and hew through the Tower, and let us take of the gold as much as shall suffice us, Whereunto the Son answered, that counsel cannot be amended: for it is better of the Emperors Gold to take (to help us) than to sell our Heritage.

So they arose in the night, and went to the Tower, and with Instruments made an hole through the Wall, and took as much Gold as they could both carry away at that time. And the Knight paid his Debts, and haunted again Justs as he did before, until all was consumed. In the mean while the Keeper of the Treasure went into the Tower; and when he saw the Treasure stolen, and a great hole made through the wall, he began to wax sore afraid, and went unto the Emperor, and shewed what had befell. To whom the Emperor said, all angry, what needs thou to shew me that? have I not delivered to thee my treasure? therefore of thee I will ask it. Anon as the Keeper heard that he went to the Tower again, and set before the hole a great Vessel full of Pitch melted, with other Gins of subtlety, that no man might come in at the hole, but he must needs fall into that Vessel; & if he had therein fell, he could no more come out of it. Not long after the Knight had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went again with his Son to steal more Gold: and as the Father went in first, anon he was fallen into the Vessel full of Pitch, to the neck: and when he saw he was taken, and could not get out, he said to his Son follow me not, for if thou dost, thou canst not escape

by any means. Then said the Son, God defe
that I should not help you; for if you are found
are all dead, and if you may not be holpen by m
I shall seek counsel how you may be delivere
The Father said, there is no other counsel but w
thy Sword smite off my Head, and as my B
dy is found without an head no man shall kn
me: and so thou and my Daughters may esca
this worldly shame and death. The son said, F
ther, ye have given the best counsel: For if
were so, that any man might perceive any know
ledge of you, none of us all shall escape death
and it is expedient that your Head be smitten o
Anon he drew out his Sword, and smote off h
Fathers H. and cast it into a Pit, and then we
and shewed unto his Sisters all the matter; w
many days after privily bewailed the death of the
Father. After this, the Keeper of the Treasu
came into the Tower, and found a Body witho
a Head; whereas he wondred sore, and shewed
unto the Emperor: to whom he said, Bind th
Body to the Tail of an Horse, and so draw hi
thorow all the Streets of the City, and diligentl
take good heed if ye hear any cry or weeping: where
soever you do hear that, he was Lord of the House
take all them and the Body, and draw them
to the Gallows and hang them. The which th
Emperors Servants fulfilled according to h
Commandment. And as they came against th
House of the dead Knight, the Daughters seein
the Body of their dead Father, made a marvellous
great shriek and wept piteously. And as their

Brother heard that, he wounded himself with a Knife, so that great plenty of Blood came out of his wound: The Officers when they heard the cry, entred the House, and demanded the cause of their clamour. Then answered the Son, They lament because I am thus wounded; for when my Sisters saw the Blood so abundantly go out, as you see, they began to weep and cry: and when the Officers saw the wound, they believed his words, and so went and hang'd the Knights Body upon the Gallows, where he hung a long time, and his Son would neither take his Body down from the Gallows, nor yet bury his Head. The Empress said, understand ye what I have said? the Emperor said, right well.

The Declaration of the Example.

THen speak the Empress thus, my Lord I fear it will so chance to you and to your Son, the Knight for the love of his Son was made poor, and first he committed Theft, and brake the Tower: secondly, caused himself to be beheaded, that his Children should have no shame. After the Son cast his head into a Dike and buried it not, neither in the Church nor in the Church-yard, and his body he suffered to hang still on the Gallows; if he could not have taken it down in the day, he might well have done it in the night. In the manner ye labour night and day, that ye may promote your Son to Honour and Riches, but without doubt he laboureth for your destruction, that he may reign after you in your Empire. Therefore

I advise you spædily to take away his life, you sa
living would suddenly prove the destruction, make
yours. The Emperor said, you have shewed in tha
a good Example. The Knights Son when he hat
smitten off his Fathers head, would bury that
without doubt my Son shall not do so to me. Thwom
anon he commanded his Officers that they shouple, t
lead him to the Gallows, and they all obeyed hecei
commandment hastily. As they led him throuword
the Stræts the people made a great noise and bid t
mentation, crying, Alas, alas, the only Son whic
the Emperor is led again towards the Gallowpero
and as they led him, the third Master named Care
ton, came riding upon an Horse: and as the Chnot
saw him, he bowed down his head to him, and Son
though he had said, have mind upon me. The
people cryed, saying, O good Master make ho be
and save your Disciple: so he smote his Hor bega
with his Spurs, and hasted to the Palace. An
when he came before the Emperor, he honourab
saluted him; who said, thy coming hither sha
nothing avail thæ, for I think it long until I
avenged on thæ. The Master replyed, I hoped day
my coming to have bæn welcome, and to have had whe
better reward, and not so to be rebuked. The Em two
peror said, as ye have deserved, so shall it be to you she
To whom he said, my Lord, what have I deser
ved? The Emperor said, ye right well deserv hav
death; for I delivered you my Son well speaking con
and well manner'd, to be informed and taught an lasc
ye have delivered him again unto me dumb, and din
Ribauld. To which the Master answered: in the you

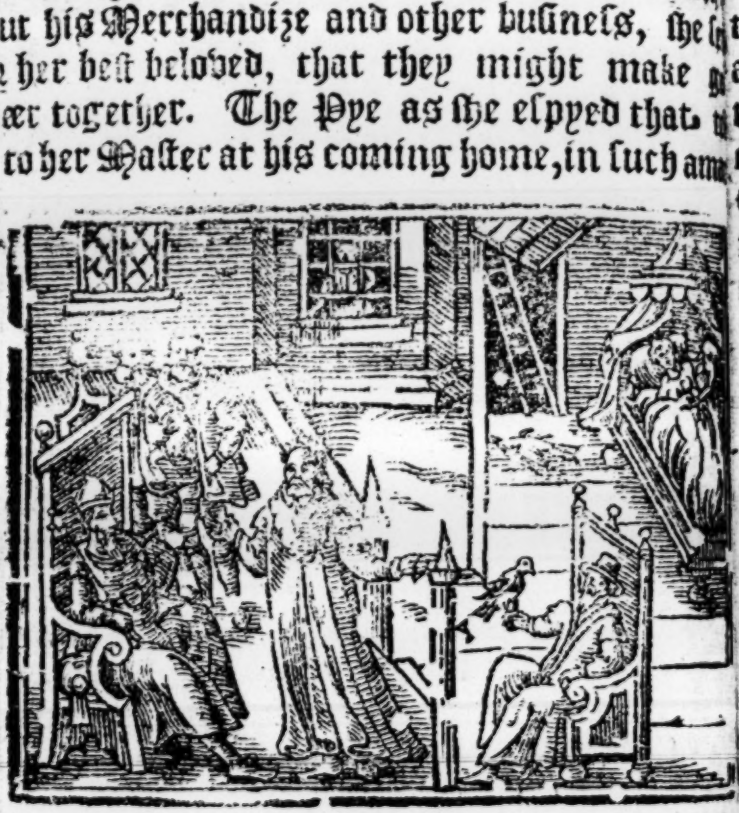
you say he is dumb, that I commit to God: For he maketh the dumb to speak, and deaf to hear: But in that you say he would have inforced your Wife, what should I gladly know, if any creature hath seen that: for there is no malice above the malice of a woman, and that I shall prove by a good Example, that a woman is full of falshood and unknown deceit: and if you put to death your Son for the words of your Wife, it shall happen unto you as it did to a Noble-man and his Wife, and his Pye, which he loved marvellously. To whom the Emperor said, I pray you tell me how that women are full of malice and leasings, who said, I shall not shew it; but if you will first call again your Son from death, then at your pleasure I shall shew the Example. Then the Emperor made his Son to be called again and put in Prison, And the Master began to tell the Example in manner following.

The Example of the third Master.

There was in a City a rich Burgess that had a Pye, which he loved so well, that every day he taught her to speak Latin and Hebrew, and when he had learned her perfectly to speak these two languages, all that she saw and heard, she shewed and told her Master.

This young Man had a fair young Wife, as ye shall have, the which he loved full well, but she on the contrary loved him not, because he was not of that lascivious performance, to answer her Lusts according to her desires: Therefore she had another young man, that she loved above her husband:

and always as her Husband was out of Town, left
bout his Merchandize and other buſineſs, ſhe ſ
for her beſt beloved, that they might make g
chær together. The Pye as ſhe eſpyed that, t
it to her Maſter at his coming home, in ſuch ama



ner as the noiſe ran all over the City of her Adu
tery; wherefore her Husband many times hea
led and chid with her; ſhe anſwered him, ye b
lieve your curſed Pye, which as long as ſhe live
will always make betwixt us variance and di
cord: and he ſaid, the Pye cannot lye; for wh
ſhe ſæth and heareth that ſhe telleth me, and there
fore I believe her more than you. It fortune
that this man went into a far Country about h
Merchandize, and as ſoon as he was gone, h
Wife ſent for her Friend and Love, to ſole
and make good chær with him: but he durſt n
come by day-light, but abode untill the Evenin

leſt he ſhould be ſeen of the people: and when the Night was come, he knocked at the Gate, and ſhe was ready and opened it. He ſaid, I fear that the curſed Pye ſhall accuſe me; for by her is come great ſlander upon us through all the City. Enter in, ſhe ſaid, boldly and fear not. As they ſhould paſs through the Hall where the Pye was in her Cage, ſhe heard him ſay theſe words, O my moſt beloved, I fear me greatly, leaſt that the Pye ſhould betray us: and as the Wife heard that, ſhe ſaid, be ſtill fool, it is dark, ſhe may not ſee you. Then the Pye hearing that, ſaid, if I ſee thee not I hear thy voice, and thou doeſt wrong to my Maſter, for thou ſleepeſt with my Miſtreſs; and when my Maſter cometh, I ſhall tell him. The young man hearing that, ſaid, told I not you that the Pye would diſcover us? And the Wife ſaid, fear not, for this Night we will be avenged on the Pye, and ſo they entred into the Chamber, and ſlept together that Night. About mid-night the Wife aroſe, and called her Maid, and ſaid, fetch me a Ladder, and ſet it up to the roof of the Houſe, that I may avenge me on the Pye. The Maid did ſo, and they went both up, and made a hole through the covering of the Houſe right over the Pye, and there threw caſt Sand, Clay, Stones, and Water upon the Pye, inſomuch that the poor Pye was almoſt dead. And on the morrow the young man went out early at the back-door. When the good man was come home, as his cuſtom was, he went and viſited the Pye, and ſaid to her, O Pye, my beloved Bird, tell me how it hath fared

the

the while I have bæn out. She ſaid, Maſter will tell you tidings that I have heard: your as ſoon as you were gone, by the night time let a man come in; and as ſoon as I heard th told him that I ſhould ſhew it you at your com home; yet ſhe led him into her Chamber, ſlept with him all Night: You ask me alſo I have done in your abſence, and I ſay to you a truth, that I was never ſo nigh my death, as was that ſame Night, with Snow, Hail, and Ra that fell upon me ſo long together, that I was moſt left for dead. The wife when ſhe heard th ſaid to her Husband, Sir, you believe your now you may hear what ſhe ſayeth, ſhe complain that in the ſame Night there fell ſo much Sno Hail, and Rain, upon her, that ſhe was alm dead: And yet there was none of them that ſa Night, for there was not in the year a clearer a fairer Night than it was; and therefore fr henceforth believe her not. Then went the g man to his Neighbours, and asked of them if that night were any Tempeſt or Rain? They a ſwered, that ſome of them walked all night a in all that year there was not ſeen a fairer nig Then went he to his houſe, and ſaid to his wife, have found you in a truth, for the night was ve fair and clear, as I underſtand of your Neighbour You may now know of a truth, ſaid ſhe, that t Pye is a lyer with her leaſings, ſhe hath ſow much diſcord betwixt us: Moreover, I am de ned through the City by her falſe leaſings. The the Burgeſs went unto the Pye, and ſaid, where

fore hast thou made lyes betwixt me and my wife? is this the thanks I have for the meat that I was wont to give thee with mine own hands every day? and thou hast thereby brought my wife into great disgrace through all the City. The Pye answered, God knoweth that I cannot lye, for that which I saw and have heard I shewed you. Then said he, thou lyest, thou hast said unto me, that in the same night was hail, snow, and rain, that thou hadst near hand lost thy life, which is false, and therefore from henceforth thou shalt make no more leasings, nor discord betwixt me and my Wife; and so took the Pye and brake her neck.

When as the Wife saw that, she was glad, and said, now thou hast done well; now may we all our days live in rest and peace. And when he had slain the Pye, he look'd up and saw in the top of his house a Ladder and a Vessel with Water, Sand, and Stones: and when he beheld that, he perceived the falshood of his Wife, and cryed with a loud voice, wo to me, that for my Wifes words I have slain my Pye, and also my solace and joy is lost, the which in all things said to me truth. And as he had thus done, anon for sorrow he left his Merchandize, and all his house, and went towards the Holy Land, and never returned home again unto his Wife. Then the Master said unto the Emperor, Sir, have you understood what I have said, he answered right well. The Master said, was not this a cursed Wife, that so by her falshood, deceit, & cunning caused the Pye to be slain. The Emperor said, in troth

the

ſhe was full of falſeneſs: it pitieth me greatly
think upon the Pye, which for her true ſayi
loſt her life. Verily I ſay unto you that you h
told me a very fair Example, therefore this day
Son ſhall not die Then ſaid the Maſter, Sir,
do wiſely; and I thank you that you have ſpar
your Son this day for my ſake, and ſo to God
commend you.

The Fourth Complaint of the Empreſs.

When the Empreſs heard that the Childe
not dead, ſhe made great noiſe, and cry
in ſuch wiſe, that ſhe was heard thorow the
lace, and ſaid, wo unto me that ever I was m
Empreſs, would to God I had died when I
firſt brought into theſe parts. When the Em
ror heard that cry that ſhe made, he entred into
Chamber, and comforted her as much as he co
and demanded the cauſe of her lamentation. S
ſaid, O mine own Lord, have you no wond
though that I be in this ſorrow and agony; fo
am your Wife and in your company, by your
I am aſhamed: ye ſaw lately the bloody mark
his inforcement upon my tender Fleſh, and
have promiſed me, that he therefore ſhould be h
ed, and yet he liveth. wherefore ſhould I no
ſorry? The Emperor anſwered, be content, and
ſhall do juſtice upon my Son to morrow: I
bore him yeſterday, at the moving of one of
Maſters by an Example. Then ſaid ſhe, have
forbid to do juſtice for one word? were it ſo,
for a word ye ſhould not let to do juſtice: and
ſay, for the Example of one Maſter ye have let

I fear me it ſhall happen to you and your Maſters, as on a time it fortuned unto an Emperor with his ſeven wiſe Maſters. The Emperor ſaid, I pray you tell me that Example. She ſaid, to what intent ſhould I labour in vain? For yeſterday I ſhewed you a good Example and it availed not: and whatſoever I ſhewed you for honour and profit, that the Maſters of your Son turn to your deſtruction; as in the preſent Example I ſhall clearly ſhew unto you. To whom the Emperor ſaid, O my beſt beloved Lady, ſhew me that Example, by the ſame I may beware; for though in my clemency I gave one days benefit of life to my Son, I ſhall not therefore give him his life; for that's deferred is not forgotten. She ſaid gladly ſhall I ſhew it to your profit, and began to tell as followeth.

The fourth Example of the Empreſs.

SOmetimes there was in the City of Rome, Seven Wiſe Maſters, by whom the Empire was governed; and the Emperor, that then was, did never attempt any thing without the counſel of his Maſters; whereupon they perceiving that the Emperor was ſo affected to them, that without them he would not ordain or do any thing, deviſed by their arts and cunning, that the Emperor ſhould clearly ſee as long as he was in the Palace, but as ſoon as he was out he ſhould become blind; and did they, that they might the more freely have the dealing themſelves of all things that appertained to the Emperor; by which they won great

profit and lucre of goods: and after they had wa
the experiment, they could never change it,
undo it afterwards: But the Emperor
still blind many years: And the Seven M
made and proclaimed throughout the Empire,
if any man had dreamed a dream, he should
unto them with a Florent of Gold or Silver,
they will expound the interpretation of his D
whereby, and by other unjust means, they ob
much more substance and money of the people
the Emperor did. So upon a time, when
at the Table with his Empress, he began
and sorrow in himself, and when she perceiv
she enquired diligently of him the cause. Th
peror said, should it not be heavy and sor
unto me, that I so long have been blind, an
not see out of my Palace, and yet find no
to whom spake the Empress and said, Lo
my counsel, and it shall never repent you,
did thereafter. In your Court you have
Wise Masters, by whom ye and all the C
are governed; if you mark, ye shall find th
the cause of your blindness: and if it be so,
are worthy to die a most shameful death: Then
hæd my advice; first send for them, and
them your infirmity, and threaten them o
lives, that they should find some speedy re
help you of your sickness and blindness.
counsel pleased the Emperor well. And
sent for the Masters, and when they were
the Emperor shewed unto them his infirmi
blindness, and charged them on pain of dea

they should presently seek some remedy to ease him thereof. Then answered they, Ye desire of us a thing that is difficult to be done thus shortly, but give us respite for two days, and we will give you your full answer. The Emperor was therewithal well contented. Then the Seven Wise Masters went unto counsel how they might restore him to his sight again, and in no wise could they find the means how to put away the blindness from the Emperor: Wherefore they were all right sorrowful, and said among themselves, without we find a Remedy, we are all but dead Men. So they throughout all the Empire sought if they could find any Remedy or Counsel therefore. It happened upon a time going through the City, in the midst thereof they found Children playing, and after them came a Man with a Talent or Florent of Gold, and said to them, Good Masters, this night have I dreamed a Dream, the Interpretation whereof I would fain know, wherefore I pray you shew me what it signifieth, and take the Gold you. That heard one of the Children (that played amongst the other) who said unto him, give me the Gold, and I will expound you the Dream. The man said, I dreamed this Night, that in the midst of mine Orchard was a great Spring of water, whereof came many small Springs, that all my Orchard was full, and overflown with water. The Child said, take a Spade, and dig the same place where you thought that the water sprung out, and there shall you find a hoard of old, so great, that you and your Children, and

Lineage ſhall be for ever rich. The Ma
as the Child had ſhewed to him, and found
Treaſure. Then went the Man to the Child
meted him a pound weight of the Gold that
found, for the interpretation of the Dream
he would receive none, but committed him
Prayers of the Man. The Seven Wiſe Ma
when they heard the Child had ſo wiſely ex
ed the Dream, they ſaid to him, good Child,
is your name? He anſwered, I am called M
Then ſaid the Maſters, we ſee ſurely great
dom in you; we ſhall ſhew you a great mat
which we would gladly find a remedy.
Child ſaid, ſhew me your matter. And the
the Emperor of Rome, as long as he is
Palace, hath his ſight very clear without a
pediment; but as ſoon as he is gone out
Palace, he cannot ſee. Now if you can fi
cauſe thereof and give preſent remedy, whe
may be eaſed and have his ſight, ye ſhall
a great Reward and Honour of the Empero
anſwered the Child, I know as well the
the blindneſs as the Remedy. Then ſaid
to him, come with us unto the Emperor,
ſhall be rewarded ſo largely, that ye ſhall
ſed; to whom the Child ſaid, I am read
with you, and when they came with the C
fore the Emperor, they ſaid unto him,
here is the Child we have brought which
fil your deſire, touching the cauſe of you
neſs, and the recovery of your ſight.
peror ſaid, Good Maſters will you take

you, that the Child will perform it? They all ſaid, yea, for we are expert in his wiſdom. The Emperor turned himſelf towards the Child, and ſaid, Will you undertake to tell me the cauſe of my blindneſs, and the remedy? the Child anſwered, my Lord the Emperor, lead me into your Bed-chamber, and there I will ſhew you what is to be done; and as he was therein brought, he ſaid to his Servants, take the Cloaths from off the Bed, and all the Apparel, and you ſhall ſee wonders; that done, they ſaw a Well ſmoaking that had ſeven Springs and Floods; which when the Emperor ſaw, he marvelled greatly: the Child ſaid, ye ſee this Well, and without it be quenched ye ſhall never have your ſight. The Emperor ſaid, how may that be? the Child ſaid, but one way: the Emperor ſaid, ſhew us the means, and if it be poſſible it ſhall be done, that I may recover my ſight as well without as within. To whom the Child ſaid, My Lord the ſeven Springs of this Well, are the Seven Wiſe Maſters, who hitherto have traiterouſly governed you and your Empire, and have made you blind as ye be without your Palace, that they your Subjects by extortion might pill and pole you not ſeeing it. But they know not the Remedy; therefore hear now my Counſel, and this Well ſhall be quenched and extinct: Strike off the firſt Maſters Head, and anon you ſhall ſee the firſt Spring quencht, and ſo by order one after another till they are all beheaded, and anon all the Springs with the Well ſhall be quenched, and ye ſhall have your ſight, as ye had before: and when this was done,

done, the Well with the ſeven Springs was fi
niſhed. And as the Emperor had his ſight again
he made the Child a great Lord, and gave hi
great abundance of goods Then ſpake the Co
piels, My Lord, have ye well perceived this Ex
ample, that I have told you? and he ſaid, yea,

the beſt wiſe, and ye have recited a worthy
good Example. Then ſaid ſhe, in the ſame m
ner your Seven Wiſe Maſters intend to do
you, with their falſe Narration, that your
may reign over your Empire, which God forbi

The Declaration of the Example.

THis Well is your Son, whereout floweth
ſprings, that ſignifieth the ſeven wiſe Maſ
which Son you may not deſtroy without th
ven wiſe Maſters be brought to nought: that
this Well, that is your Son, with all his
ſhall not eſcape, but let him taſte of death,

hefts his shameful deserts, lest he have a help of his Masters) and after consequently the Seven Masters, and so you shall govern and guide your Empire in peace and rest. The Emperor anon commanded his Servants to lead his Son to the Gallows, which they were loath to do. Then a great multitude of people gathered with great noise and bewailing, so that the fourth Master, named Malquidrake heard thereof, who leapt upon his Horse and hasted to the Palace, where he met with his Disciple, and commended him unto him; and when he came before the Emperor, and did his obeysance, the Emperor said, little thanks shall you have, you old cursed Caitif, for so ill teaching my Son; I delivered you my Son well speaking, and in all things right vertuous; but you have sent him home a Fool, dumb, and a Ribauld, for he would have lain with my Wife by force; and therefore all ye forthwith shall be hang'd, Then said the Master, my Lord, I have not deserved so ill of you, God knoweth why your Son speaketh not; in short time you shall perceive other things, but the time is not yet come: you say he would have oppressed your Wife, that is not truth nor proved; for neither for one single person should you judge your Son to death; if for the Words of your Wife you judge your Son to die, it shall be worse to you than to a certain old Man and his Wife, and that I shall well prove. To whom the Emperor said, I think you do with me, as sometimes seven wise men did to an Emperor. Whereupon said the Master, the offence of one, nor of twen-

ty may not ſound to the rebuke of all other: but
one thing of atruth I ſhall ſhew you that even ſhe
come to you, if ye this day put your Son to dea
for the words of your Wife, of which I could ſhe
a notable Example. Then ſaid the Emperor, t
cite it. The Maſter ſaid, if you will call your So
from death, then will I rehearſe the Example
elſe not. The Emperor commanded he ſhould
called again: and deſired the Maſter to ſay as he
after followeth.

The Example of the fourth Maſter.

There was an old Knight, and a right wi
Man that lived long without Wife or Chil
His Friends oftentimes exhorted him to take
Wife.

The Knight thus counſelled by his Friends,
laſt agreed unto them, and they gave him to Wi
the Daughter of the Provoſt of Rome, that wa
rich and comely of feature; whom when he ſa
he began to love marvellouſly well; and wh
he had been married a certain ſpace and had
Child, in the morning it happened that ſhe wa
to the Church, where ſhe met with her Moth
who ſaid, my Daughter, how pleaſeth you yo
Marriage and your Huſband? She ſaid, right ill
for you have given me an old lame man, to m
diſcontentment in all reſpects and I would y
had the ſame time buried me; for I had rather
and eat with the Swine, than with him, there
I may no longer thus endure, but I muſt nee
love an other. Then ſaid the Mother: God forb

and she made a great fire and went to meet him, and set him a stool before the fire to warm him; and as he a little while had sitten, he perceived the odour of the fire, and called the Gardiner, and said, I smell by this odour that the new Plant burneth in the fire: The Gardiner said, Lord it is true, my Lady your Wife hath felled it down. The Knight said unto her, God forbid that my Plant should be cut down by you. She answered anon. Lord I have done it, knowing the weather and you also cold, and therefore I have ordained this fire for your comfort. And as the Knight heard that, he looked angerly upon her, and said, O cursed woman, how was thou so obdurate relentless and void of pity, as to hew down so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest it well, that I loved it above all my other Trees? When he had so said, she began to weep and excuse her self, and said, my Lord, I have done it for your good, and do you take it grievously? and began to cry, wo, wo, be to me. Anon as the Knight saw the weeping of his Wife, and heard the cause he was moved with pity, and said, unto her, cease your weeping and beware how you anger me any more, or trouble me in any thing I love. The next day early in the morning she went again to the Churchyard, and met with her Mother coming home, and they saluted each other. Then the Daughter said unto the Mother; O dear Mother, I will love the Priest, for I have attempted my Lord, as you counselled me, but all for nought, for anon he forgave it, when he saw me a little weep. Then said the

Mother.

Mother, though old men for one time forgive, they double the pain another time, and therefore I counſel you, that you yet once again tempt him. Then ſaid the Daughter I may no longer abide, for I ſuffer ſo much pain for the love of the Prieſt, that with my tongue I cannot tell it, therefore you ſhall pardon me, I will no more follow your counſel. Then ſaid the Mother: for the love that the Child ſhould have unto the Mother, attempt him yet once more for your Fathers bleſſing; then if you go quietly without harm or beating, love the Prieſt in the name of God. Then anſwered the Daughter, it is to me great pain ſo long to abide; nevertheleſs for the bleſſing of my Father, I will once more attempt him: But tell me how I ſhall begin. The mother ſaid, I underſtand that he hath a little Hound that he loveth well, and kæpeth on his bed, caſt the Hound with great might before his face againſt the wall that it die, and if you eſcape without a ſtripe, or he forgive it lightly, then in the name of God love the Prieſt: The Daughter ſaid, I will in all things do after your counſel, for there is no Daughter living at this day, that would more gladly have the bleſſings of Father and Mother then I: and ſo ſhe had her Mother farewel, and went home again, and that day with great trouble of her heart ſhe brought to the night: and when the night was come, ſhe commanded the Bed to be covered with Purple and Cloth of Gold, whilſt the Knight ſat by the fire; and when the Bed was made ready, the little Hound as he was accuſtomed leaped upon

the

the Bed, and she took him by the hinder legs, and with a malicious heart she cast him against the Wall, that it lay still dead. When the good old Knight saw that, he was marvellously angry, and said with a loud voice to his Wife, O thou most cruel and spiteful of all wicked Women, how couldest thou find in thine Heart to kill that gentle Hound, that I loved so much? Lord, said she, have you not seen how with his feet (coming out of the mire) bewrayed our Bed, that is so preciously covered with rich Cloaths. And the Knight said with much anger: Know you not that I loved much better my little Hound than the Bed? when she heard that, she began pitiously to weep, and said, Wo be to me that ever I was born, for all things that I do for the best, are turned to the worst. The Knight out of the treasure of his pity would not suffer the weeping of his Wife, but for that he loved her so well, said unto her, cease your weeping, for I forgive it you all together; and I counsel you, beware how you displease me from henceforth: And so they went to Bed together.

Upon the morrow very early she went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, to whom when she had done Reverence, as it behoved her she said, Mother, now will I love the Priest, for I have attempted my Husband the second time and all things he hath suffered. The Mother said O my dear Daughter there's no cruelty or falshood above the cruelty of old Folks, and therefore one more prove him. To whom the Daughter answered: Mother, you labour in vain; for if yo

wilt what, and how much pain I suffered for thy Priest's love, you should help me if you love me. The Mother said, hear me Daughter this time and I shall never lett you more: think how you have sucked Milk out of my Breast, and the great pain I suffered at your Birth: by these pains, my dear Daughter, I charge you deny not this good Petition, and I promise you no more to lett you nor hinder you of your content, but rather to help you. Then answered the Daughter, it is to my great pain to abstain so long from the love of thy Priest: Nevertheless for the great charge you have laid to me, and for that ye have made a Vow no more to lett me, but to further me, tell me how I might attempt him, and I shall once more adventure. The Mother said, I know on Sunday next he intendeth to have us all to Dinner, your Father and I, and all your Friends, with all the rest of the City, and when you are set in your place, and all the Meats are brought and served up on the Table, fasten your keys privily, that hang at your Girdle, in the Table-cloth, and then feign to have forgotten your Knife, and say these words openly: See what a short wit I am of, I have forgotten my knife in my Chamber! And then rise up hastily, and go, and the Cloth with all the Meats you shall overthrow upon the ground: and if you escape without pain, I make a vow to God, I shall never lett you after. The Daughter said, that shall I gladly do, and so took her leave and departed. The Feast-day came, and all (as the Mother said) was bid, the Servants ser-

vered

vered the Table, all were ſet, and the Daughter ſet over againſt her Lord; and when the Table was well ſerved with Meats, and other things belonging, the Lady of the Houſe ſaid with a loud voice: See how forgetful I am, I have left my knife in my Chamber, which I muſt fetch: And ſo roſe up haſtily and drew the Cloth with all the meat upon it with her, and all the Gold Veſſels and the Salts fell upon the ground. The Knight waxed ſore angry in heart, but diſſembling before the Gueſts, and commanded another Cloth and other Meats to be brought: and with joy ſaluted his Gueſts to eat and make good chear, ſo that they were all merry. The Feaſt, or dinner done, they all gave thanks to the Knight, and took their leaves, every Man towards his own Houſe. Upon the next day, in the morning the Knight roſe early, and went to the Church to hear Service; after which, he went to the Barber, and ſaid unto him, Sir, are you expert in blood-letting, in what vein I will deſire you? And he ſaith, Sir I am expert in what vein you can name in a Man's Body. The Knight ſaid, I am content, come with me. And when he was come into the Houſe, he entred his Chamber where his wife lay in Bed, and ſaid unto her, Riſe up quickly. Then ſaid ſhe, what ſhall I do up ſo early, it is not nine of the Clock? The Knight ſaid, You muſt riſe up, for you muſt be letten Blood, in both your Arms. She ſaid, I was never letten Blood, and ſhall I now bleed? then ſaid the Knight, That is truth, and therefore you are a Fool: Remember, firſt, you hewed down

my Trœ, another time you killed my litle Hou
and but yeſterday you ſhamed me beſore all
Friends and Parents. If I ſhould ſuffer
thus to go on, you would for ever ſhame me.
cauſe hereof I conſider, you have evil and
blood within your body, and therefore I will
the corrupt blood be drawn out, that ye from hen
forth ſhall put me to no more ſhame and ang
ſo cauſed to be made a great fire, and ſhe
and cryed, and held up her hands towards
ven, and ſaid, My Lord, forgive my treſpaſs,
have pity on me at this time, and I will n
more offend you. The Knight ſaid, pray fo
mercy, for the mercy that God hath wrough
wards thœ at this preſent, is this, that
thou holdeſt thine Arm ſtraight, I ſhall ſon
thy hearts blood, and ſaid to the Barber, ſm
hard and make a dœp hole in her Arm, or I
give you a great ſtripe; then ſmote the Barb
ſore, that the blood came abundantly out, and
Knight would not ſuffer him to ſtench it, untill
time that ſhe changed her colour in her Viſage;
as this was done, he bad it to be ſtopped, and
led the Barber to ſmite the vein upon the o
Arm: Then ſhe cryed with a very loud voic
ſwœt Husband I pray have compaſſion on me,
now I die. The Knight anſwered, Wife,
ſhould have thought on this before, ere you had
to me theſe thœ deſpites. Then ſhe held out
left Arm, and the Barber ſmote thereon a
hole, that the blood came out right ugly, and
ſuffered her to blœd till her Viſage was

nd ſhe ſwoned: Then ſaid the Knight now unbind er Arm, and ſtench it; and ſaid unto her, now o to bed and ſtudy, and think henceforth to amend our life, or I ſhall draw the blood of your heart. s this was done he gave the Barber his Reward, nd he went again to his own Houſe, and his ife being under the hands of her Maids, almoſt ead, was lead to her bed: ſhe made one of her aidens go to her Mother in haſte, and ſay, that deſire her to come and ſpeak with me before I e: the Mother when ſhe heard that, was glad of he correction of her Daughter, and came haſtily o her. When the Daughter heard her Mother, he ſaid, O my ſweet Mother I am almoſt dead or I have bled ſo much, that I believe I ſhall not cape death Then anſwered the Mother, ſaid not that old men are right cruel; will ye now ve the Prieſt? ſhe ſaid, the Devil may the Prieſt onfound, I will never love other but my Hus- nd. Then ſaid the Maſter to the Emperor, Lord ve you underſtood me; he anſwered right well, r amongſt all I have heard, this was the beſt ample. Three evil deeds ſhe did to her Hus- and; and I doubt not, if ſhe had done the fourth, e would have ſhamed him for ever. Then ſaid e Maſter, therefore I counſel your hat you beware your Wife, leſt it happen worſe to you, which ppears manifeſtly in this Example, if you put to ath your only Son for her words, you ſhall be de- ived in the end, and for ever ſhall repent it. The mperor ſaid, truly Maſter this day my Son ſhall t die. The Maſter ſaid, my Lord, I thank you,

that you for my sake this day have spared
only Son.

The fifth Complaint of the Empress.

The Empress hearing the Child was not
forthwith apparelled her self, and ca
the Wains to be in readiness as though she
have gone unto her own Country to her Fa
to complain of the great shame that was done
and yet could have no remedy. The Serv
sæing that, shewed to the Emperor, that the
press was going into her Countrey: When
perceived that, he went to her, saying, wh
are you going? I hoped you had loved me, so
in all the World you would have sought
lace but with me. To which she said, that is
and therefore I go from you, for I had rather
of your death, than sæ you die: You delig
much to hear these Masters, that it shall happ
you as it did to Octavian the Emperor, the
was so covetous, that the Noblemen of the
pire buried him quick, and filled his mouth
molten Gold. The Emperor said, dear W
not so, that the blame on you and me be not
Then said the Empress, truly Sir, the bla
yours, for have you not promised me many
your Son shall die, yet he liveth? therefore I
no more believe. Then said the Emperor,
cometh not a King every cause lightly to
without great advice, especially upon his Son
whom it is not mæt, but upon deliberation
good counsel to pass judgment: Therefore I

you tell me somewhat by which I may govern my life, for it is the destruction of a King, without advice, undiscretly to give judgment She answered I will gladly tell you a notable Example, so that hencefortyou will not be desirous to hear the Masters, and began in this form following.

The fifth Example of the Empress

Octavianus the Emperor reigned in Rome, right rich and covetous, and above all things he loved Gold. The Citizens of Rome at that time did much harm, and many great outrages to other Nations, insomuch that divers Regions were moved against the Romans. In that time was Master Virgilius, the which excelled in Magick and other Sciences all other Masters: the Citizens prayed him that by his Art he would devise, how they of their Enemies might have warning before-hand, whereby they might provide for themselves the better. And he made by his cunning a Tower, and on the Tower did cause to be set as many Images as in all the World were Regions and Provinces, and in the midst of the Tower an Image, which held in his hand an Apple, or a great round Ball of Gold, and every Image of the Tower held in his hand a little Bell, and stood turning and looking towards his own Province to him assigned: and as often as any Province would rebel against the Romans, so often turned he to the Images of the Land, and rung the Bell; that hearing, the Citizens of Rome armed themselves, and so that Province halted with

all their might the ſame to ſubdue: ſo there
no Land ſo great that could wreak them upon
Romans, and therefore were they feared over
the World. Alſo that Maſter Virgil made for
comfort of the poor people a light that always
ned; and by that light he made two Bathes,
one of them hot, in which the poor people m
bathe, and waſh themſelves: and the other
in which they might themſelves refreſh.
twixt the Light and the Bathes, he made an
mage, ſtanding, in whoſe fore-head was wri
He that ſmiteth me ſhall anon have venge
The Image ſtood there many years, and at
came a Clerk and beheld the Image, and read
writing, and thought in himſelf, what benge
he might find; therefore I do believe better,
ny man ſmite thee, and thou falleſt there
to the earth, he ſhall find ſome Treaſure under
feet, and therefore is the Writing, that no
ſhould have it. And the Clerk liſt up his
and gave the Image a great ſtroak, that it fe
the ground: and anon the Light was out, and
Bathes were baniſhed away, and he found no T
ſure. The poor folks perceiving that, were
ſorrowfull, and laid their curſes and compla
upon him, that for his ſingular Covetouſneſs
deſtroyed the Images, and robbed them of ſo gr
Solace. Hereafter aſſembled three Kings, whi
the Romans had ſuffered great wrongs, and
to take counſel how they might be avenged o
Romans and ſome of them ſaid, we labour in
for as long as there ſtandeth the Tower wit

Images, we cannot do any thing against them.

At the counsel arose four Knights, and said, we have thought on a remedy how to destroy the Tower with the Images, and that to do, we will lay our lives to pledge, if you will be at the cost. Then answered the Kings, what cost shall we be at: they answered, Four Tun of Gold. Then said the King, take the Gold, and fulfil your promise. The Knights took the Gold, and went towards Rome: and when they came thither in the night without one of the Gates, in the Ditch full of Water, they drowned one of the Tuns with the Gold in it, and another Tun they drowned by the second Gate, and the third Tun they drowned by the third Gate; and the fourth Tun by the fourth Gate; and when they had thus done, early in the morning they entred into the City at an hour convenient, and as the Emperor went over to the Market they did him reverence. The Emperor seeing them, demanded from whence they were, of what Science, and what service they could do. They answered we are all of far Countries, and Southsayers, so perfect, that there is never a thing so privily hid, but we shall find it out by our Dreams. We have heard that ye labour and have pleasure in such things, and therefore we come unto you to know if you have need of our service: the Emperor said, I will prove you; and if it be, that I find you true, you shall have of me great rewards and thanks. They said we ask nothing but the half of the Gold which by us shall be found: the Emperor said I am well content.

And thus they had with the Emperor many word
At night when the Emperor was going to bed
they said unto him, My Lord, if it please you, this
night shall the eldest of us set his Cunning awa
and dream: the third day he shall shew you h
Dream, and what it signifieth. The Emperor sai
go in God's Name. And they went forth wit
great gladness; and this night they passed wit
great joy and mirth, upon trust they should com
to a good purpose. When the third day was come
they went early to the Emperor; the first said, m
Lord please you to go with us without one of th
Gates of the City, and I will shew where ther
is a Tun full of Gold hid; the Emperor said, I
shall go with you and see if it be true that you sa
And when they were come to the place, they dre
out the Tun, that they before there had put; th
Emperor when he saw that, was glad and gav
them their part. Then said the second Dreamer
My Lord, this night I shall dream, then the Emp
ror said, God give you a good Dream; the ne
night came, and he took out the other Tun and gav
it to the Emperor and took also his share. In th
like manner the third & the fourth; upon which th
Emperor was out of all measure joyous, and said
he had not seen such true and expert Southsayers
or Dreamers as they were. Then said they all t
them together, as if it had been out of one mouth
my Lord we have all one after another dream
ed, the which you have seen, they be all proved
but now if it please you that we dream altog
ther this night, we trust that to us shall be shewed
th

[illegible] find a great quantity of Gold and [illegible] Emperor said, God give you a good [illegible] and you may be profitable. [illegible] they came again unto the [illegible] unto him with countenance full of [illegible] Lord we bring good and profitable [illegible] for this night in our sleeps, so great a Treasure is to us shewed, the which if you will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so inriched, that in this World none shall be like unto you. The Emperor said, where shall we find this Treasure? they said under the Foundation of the Tower that the Images stand upon. The Emperor answered, God defend I should for love of Gold destroy the Tower with the Images, wherewith we from our Enemies be defended and warned. They said to him again, my Lord, have you found us in our sayings otherwise than true? The Emperor said, nay: O Lord (said they) we with our own hands shall give out the Gold, without hurting the Tower, or the Images. And it is expedient (that secretly in the night) by us it be done, for dread of resort and concourse of the people, lest that it should run in the clamour of them and they take that good Gold away from you and us. The Emperor said, go in the Name of God, and do your best as you will, or can, and I shall to morrow early come to you. Then went they with gladness, and in the night were let into the Tower, and then with great haste and diligence they undermined it, and on the next day, very early in the morning, mounted

upon their Horses, and rod again towards the
own Country with Joy and Glory; and ere they
came without the sight of Rome, the Tower fell
down on the morning ensuing. When it was
fallen, and the Senators it perceived, they sor-
rowed greatly, and there was a great bewailing
throughout all the City; and they went unto the
Emperor, and said, Lord how may it be that the
Tower is thus fallen, by the which we have al-
ways had warning afore of our enemies? he an-
swered and said, to me came four false deceivers
and feigned themselves to be South-sayers, and
that they could find Treasure in the ground, and
said, that under the foundation of the Tower was
hidden an innumerable sum of Gold, the which
they should undermine without hurting the Tower
and Images: I gave faith to them, and they have
deceived me. They answered, ye have coveted
much Gold, that for your unsatiate covetousness
we shall all be destroyed; but first your covet-
ness shall fall upon your self. Then they took him
and led him to the Capitol, and laid him on his
back, and poured his mouth full of molten Gold,
saying to him, you have desired Gold and therefore
you shall drink Gold: and after that they buried
him quick. Not long after that, came the Enemy
against the Romans, and overcame and destroyed
them all.

Then said the Empress unto the Emperor, have
ye, my Lord, this Example well understood, and
he said right well: then said she, the Tower with
Images is your Body with five wits: as long

you live there is none so hardy to trouble or to make War upon you, nor upon your People; that hath your Son right well understood, and doth with the seven Masters and their false Narrations or Fables, seek how they might destroy you; for you are overmuch covetous to encline to them, insomuch that they shall undermine you and cast you underfoot, and bring you to nought; the Images are your five Wits that be all lost. And forasmuch as you be foolish they shall destroy you, and your Son shall obtain your Empire.

The Emperor said, ye have recited a good Example; wherefore it shall not happen to me as to the Tower but my Son first this day shall taste the bitterness of death. To whom the Empress said, if ye do so, ye shall speed well and live long. Upon the same day he commanded his Son to be led to hanging; and as he was led towards the Gallows, came riding against him upon a Horse, the fifth Master towards the Palace, who came before the Emperor and saluted him with all reverence but he despised his salutation, and put him in fear of his life. The Master said unto the Emperor, My Lord, I have not deserved for to die; and to despise my Salutation, it is not for your Honour: for your Son hath not with us been of such condition, as ye repute him, as ye in short time shall find; and that he speaketh not, is of his great wisdom: and know ye that he shall well speak as his time cometh, though he now speaketh not, as you in short time shall hear. But that he would have shamed your Wife, believe not, for so wise a man as he is would never

never attempt so shameful a deed: and if you p
him to death for your Wives words, ye shall n
escape without shame and vengeance, like as Ipp
cras escaped not without vengance for the death
Gallienus his Cousin. The Emperor said, th
would I fain hear and understand. Then said th
Master, what would it avail me to tell you th
Narration for your profit, if in the mean seas
your Son should die; wherefore if you will call
gain your Son, it shall be discovered at your ple
sure, after do as you think best. The Empe
had call again his Son, and set him in prison
then began the Master to tell on the manner
followeth.

The Example of the fifth Master.

SOmetimes there was a famous Physician nam
ed Ippocras, right cunning, who excelled a
others in Learning and Science: He had wit
him his Nephew Gallienus, the which he loved
much: This Gallienus was of excellent wit, an
applied all his mind and wit to learn of his Un
cle the Science of Physick. When Ippocras pe
ceived that, in so much as he could, he hid from
him his cunning, fearing he should excel him i
that knowledge, for the great wit he was of.

As Gallienus saw this, he studied and exercised
insomuch that in short time he had perfect cun
ning in Physick, for the which Ippocras envyed
him much. It happened upon a time thereafter
that the King of Hungary sent his Messenger
unto Ippocras, that he should come unto him
for to cure his Son. Ippocras excused himself,
and

and ſent his Couſin Gallienus with Letters of his excuſe for his not coming. When Gallienus was come before the King, he was worſhipfully receiued and they marbelled Ippocras would not come. ye excuſed him, ſaying, that he had many great things to do, and he might not come, but hath ſent me in his ſtead; and with the help of God I ſhall make whole the Child: That pleaſed very well the King, Gallienus went to the Child, and when he had ſæn the Uertue, and touched his

Pulſes, he ſaid to his Quæn: O excellent Princeſs, I pray you hear and ſuffer my words, and tell me who is the Father of the Child, ſhe ſaid, who ſhould be the Father but my Lord the King. Gallienus ſaid, I am ſure he is not the Father: ſhe anſwered, if you will ſay that for a truth, I ſhall cauſe your head to be ſmote off: he anſwered, I ſay once again, that this King is not the Father, and I am not come hither to loſe my head, for I

have

have not deserved any such reward, and was g
ing his way. The Queen spake, O good Ma
Galliemus, if you will keep it secret, and not
cover me, I shall open unto you my heart. T
Master said, God defend that from me, that I
any Person should shew it: and therefore O no
Quæn shew it boldly to me, for it shall never p
my mouth, and I shall make your Son whole,
said, if ye do that, ye shall have a good reward; h
therefore what I shall say: By fortune came
ther unto my Lord, the King of Burgundy, a
he was so long conversant with me, that t
Child by him I bear. Then said the Maste
fear not, I knew it was so before. And an
he gave the Child Medicines, and compoun
ed things, whereof to eat and drink, and the Ch
was eased of his infirmity. And when the Ki
heard that the Child was recovered of his sickness
he gave unto the Master a good reward: but of
Quæn he secretly received a great gift, and spe
al thanks, and so went his ways. And when
was come home. Ippocras his Master deman
ed of him, saying, have ye beheld the Child? a
he said yea, then asked he him what he gave hi
either compounds or uncompounded things: the
said Ippocras, that Mother of the Child is not tru
to her Husband: That is truth saith Gallienus
Then Ippocras was moved with envy, and though
in himself, if there be not found a Remedy m
Sciences shall be no more set by, but he shall b
prised above me. And from that day forward h
devised how he might slay him. Upon a day Ippo
cra

cras called him, and said, come go with me to seek and gather Herbs in the Garden: to whom he said, Master I am ready. And when they were come into the Garden, Ippocras said, I see that this Herb is right vertuous, stop down and gather me of it. And Gallienus did so. And as they went about the Garden, said Ippocras, now I well perceive the odour of this Herb, that is more precious than Gold; and therefore stop down to the ground and draw it out with the root, for it is much worth: Gallienus bowed down himself to pull out the Herb, and Ippocras drew out his knife and killed him: After that, Ippocras fell sick to the death, that the strength of his Body failed him, and did as much as he could to help himself, but that could not be. And as the Scholars and Disciples heard of it, they went hastily unto him, and did all they might or could, for profit of his health, but it availed them nothing.

When Ippocras this perceived, he said unto his Scholars: fetch me a great Tun, and fill it full to the brim with Water; and when they had so done, he said unto them: Make now therein an hundred holes; and when that was also done, there went none of the Water out. Then said Ippocras, Behold my most dear Disciples how the vengeance of God is fallen upon me, as you may openly see: for in this Tun are an hundred holes, and goeth not there out any drop: Right so there cometh no vertue out of the Herbs to help me, and therefore what ye do unto me, helpeth not; for I must die: but my dear Children, if my Nephew

Gallienus

Gallienus were alive he could heal me, whom
have ſlain, and that grieveth me ſore, and the
fore the vengeance of God cometh upon me; a
this ſaid, he turned to the wall and gave up
ghoſt. Then ſaid the Maſter unto the Empe
My Lord, underſtand, yea, well what I have ſa
he anſwered, yea, right well: what hurt had
been to him if Gallienus had lived.

The Maſter anſwered it had been better for
pocras at that time had not he died, and there
by the right wiſe judgment of God, his Medicin
availed him not, and therefore I ſhewed to you th
it ſhall happen worſe to you if that you put to dea
your Son for the words of your Wife, who
time of neceſſity ſhall eaſe and ſuccour you. A
conſider you not, that ye have after the firſt wi
wedded this wife that ye now have: And ſo y
may the third and fourth, and never ſhall ye ha
ſuch a Son, that ſhall ſave you from peril. T
Emperor ſaid, truly he ſhall not die.

Then ſaid the Maſter, then do you that becom
eth the wiſdom of your years and the Royalty
your Perſon, and I commend you to God, an
I thank you that ye have this day for me ſpar
your Son. The Emperor ſaid, I mark this w
that women are very crafty, therefore I will n
for you, but for my ſelf ſpare him.

The ſixth Complaint of the Empreſs.

When the Empreſs had knowledge there
ſhe ſhewed her ſelf impatient, that
that ſaw her, or heard her, wondred, and ſaid

the Emperor, your wife pineth as though she would shortly die. The Emperor hearing thereof went to her, and said, wherefore (good Lady,) be you so impatient? She answered, saying, O Lord, how should I hold it in, when I am the only Daughter of a King and your Wife, and in you company I have had great despite, and you have promised to punish him, but performe it not? The Emperor said, I wot not what to do, ye labour to have my Son put to death, & the Masters labour to save his life; and amongst these I know he is my Son: but where the truth is, that I know not. Then said she, this is the cause whereof I complain, that ye believe the Masters more than me; and therefore it shall happen to you, as it did to a King and his Steward.

Then said the Emperor, tell me that Example, peradventure it may move me sooner to put my Son to death; she said gladly, but I pray give attention to what I say: and began as ensueth.

The

The sixth Example of the Empress.

There was a King most proud and deform in his Visage, so that all women hated hi The King thought to destroy all Rome, and ca ry away the Bodies of Peter and Paul; who wh he was in the mind, called his Steward that w secretly with him of his Privy Council, and sa unto him, go seek a fair woman that this nig may sleep with me. The Steward answered, m Lord, ye know your infirmity, and no wom would do evil without a great sum of mony. T King said, think you for my mony I will wa one? have I not Gold and Silver enough? thou it were a thousand Florents I would it give. T Steward hearing that, was smitten with co tousness, and went to his wife, which was fai chaste, and of good kindred, and said to her, O good Wife, my Lord desireth to sleep with a ve tuous Woman, and would not forbear it thou she ask a thousand Florents; and hath comman ed me for to provide him one: therefore: I cou sel you, that you may get that mony. The Wi said, were it so that the King were not so prou and full of Visage, yet would I not consent fo the sin against God. The Steward said, I com mand you, and promise you, that without you con sent herein ye shall never have a good day wi me: she hearing that trembled, insomuch that fo fear she consented unto him.

The Steward then went unto the King, an said, Sir, I have found a fair Woman, and she i

com

ome of a very good houſe, which will not have
ls then a thouſand Florents; in the Ebening ſhe
all come and early in the morning muſt go away,
hat ſhe be not ſeen. The King anſwered I am con-
ented. When night was come, the Steward led
is Wife to the Kings Bed, made faſt the door,
nd went his way. Early in the morning the
teward aroſe and went unto the King, and ſaid,
y Lord, it will be day within a while, it is good
ou perform your promiſe, and let the woman go.
he King ſaid, This woman pleaſeth me ſo well,
hat ſo ſoon ſhe ſhould not depart. When he heard
hat, he departed all ſorry, and tarried a while, and
me to the King again, and ſaid, My Lord, the
orning is come, therefore let the woman go,
nd as I promiſed her leſt ſhe be aſhamed. The
ing ſaid yet ſhall ſhe not go; therefore go out,
nd ſhut the door. The Steward right ſorrowful
parted, and went up and down with a heavy
art, till the clear day appeared: then he
tred again into the Chamber, and ſaid, my Lord,
s clear day, ſuffer the Woman to depart, that
e be not aſhamed. The King anſwered, I ſay ſhe
all not yet depart, for her company is to me well
eaſing. The Steward hearing that, could no
nger forbear to hold his own counſel, but ſaid, O
y good Lord, I beſeech you ſuffer her to depart,
it is mine own Wife. The King hearing that,
d to him, open the Window, and when it was
n, the bright day appeared, and he beheld the
oman fair, and perceived it was the Wife of the
teward, and ſaid, O thou ſtain of Man-hood, and

shame of the Creation, why hast thou for so
Money shamed thy good wife, and delivered her
to me unwitting? Therefore haste thee, and get
out of my Realm, and never come in my sight
if ever I see thee, thou shalt die the most sham
death that can be imagined. When the Stew
heard that, he fled, and durst not abide, and n
more came into the Realm. And the King kept
Wife all his lifetime in great honour, and gave
plenty of all things that to her appertained.

After that the King caused to be assem
mighty Army of puissant men of war, and
to the City of Rome with great might, and b
ed it on all sides, untill the Romans would ha
livered to him (for to have withdrawn himself
thence) the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, S
ter and Paul.

Then there was in the City Seven
Masters as ye now have, by the Counsel of
all the City was governed. And the Ci
came unto them and said, what shall we do
behoves us that we give unto our Enemi
Bodies of the Holy Apostles, or the City
answered the first Master, I shall with my
dom this day save the City, and the Bodies
Apostles. And so every one of them p
for one day to do the like, in like manner as
Masters have promised your Son. With
the King began to assault the City in all p
Then began the first Master to alleage so
to have Peace, that the King that day left
Assault, and withdrew a little from the City:

did all the Maſters one after another, till the
ſt: Unto whom came the Burgeſſes of the City,
nd ſaid, O Maſter, ye ſhall underſtand, that the
ing hath ſworn, that to morrow with all his
rength he will win the City, and we muſt all be in
opardy to loſe our lives? Therefore acquitting
ur promiſe, defend us from danger, like as
ur fellows before you have done Then an-
wered the Maſter, Fear not, for to morrow, I
all by my cunning ſhew ſuch an operation, that
e King and all his might ſhall leave the Stage.
he next day the King gave a great aſſault to the
ity; then went the Maſter and cloathed himſelf
a marvellous ſtrange Veſture, having therein
e Feathers of Peacocks, and other Fowls of di-
rs Colours, and took two bright Swords in
h hand one, and went therewith and ſtood up-
the higheſt Tower of the City, and began to
be and turn, and ſhew himſelf towards the Hoſt,
hat they might all behold him; and he held
his mouth the two bright Swords that mar-
lously ſhined, They without the Kings Hoſt be-
ding that, ſaid unto him, O King, behold on the
of yonder Tower a wonderful thing: yea
oth he) I ſee it right well, it is marvellous,
what it is I know not. They ſaid, it is the
d of Chriſtian Folk, that is come out of Hea-
to ſlay us with two Swords if we longer a-
The King hearing that, trembled for fear
ſaid, what ſhall we do? There is but one way,
that is, that we depart from hence leſt their
revenge himſelf upon us. Then began the

King with his Host to flye: Notwithstandi
there was no næd, for they of the Master was
ceived. When the Romans saw that, they h
ly pursued them, well armed, and slew the K
with many of the people, and in that manner
great subtlety of the Masters) was the mig
King with his Army subdued. Then said the
peels unto the Emperor, Lord, have you und
stood what I have said? He said yea with gre
tention. She said, now you have heard wha
said unto you at the beginning of this Narrat
of the Steward, that the King trusted so m
which for covetousnels shamed his own Wife
for that was banished out of the Land: in like
ner your Son for the desire he hath to the Em
intendeth to destroy you: But whilst he is in
power, do with him as the King did with his
ard. If you will not put him to death, then put
out of your Empire, that you may live in
guard of your life. And have you also heard
the King lay before Rome, and how he wa
the Wise Masters deceived, and he with hi
lowers were slain? In like manner the S
wise Masters intended to deal with you, and
crafty wiles deceive you, and in the end m
rously murther you, that so your Son might
in your Empire. Whereupon answered the
peror, that shall not be, for to morrow my
shall die. Then he commanded his Servants
with to lead his Son to Execution. Whe
people heard these things, they gathered in
Troops, much lamenting the death of the E

roy's Son. And as soon as the sixth Master heard thereof, he hasted to the Emperoy's Court, and saluted him with reverence, but he disdainfully threatned him that he should be put to death with his Son, for he was with them made dumb and a Ribauld, which was shewed towards his Wife. The Master replyed, I have not deserved to die with your Son, but to have large Gifts; for he is not dumb, as you shall hear within three days if he may live so long; but if you put him to death for the Words of your Wife, then I shall marvel at your Wisdom. and without doubt it shall happen to you, as sometimes it happened to a Knight that so much allowed the saying of his wife, that he was bound to the Horse-tail, and drawn through the City to the Gallows. The Emperoy said for the love of God shew me that Example, that I may beware of that evil. That I will not do, said the Master, without you call again your Son. Then he commanded to call back his Son: And the Master began as followeth.

The Example of the sixth Master.

SOmetimes there was an Emperoy of Rome which had three Knights, whom he loved above all others: in the same City there was an ancient Knight that had wedded a fair young Wife which above all things he loved, as you do the Empress: the Lady could sing with such sweetness, that many desired her company. It befell in a season as she sate in the House, her Visage

turned to the Street that she might see them th
walked by, and began sweetly to sing, that a
Folks delighted to hear her. By chance came th
ways a Knight of the Emperor's Court that hea
her voice, and beholding her with a willing mi
and attentive ear, he was exceedingly taken in lov
And entring the house, fell into talk with her gre
ly, but chiefly of love, and amongst other talk,
demanded of her, what he should give her to li
by her side one night? she answered, an hundr
Florents. Then said the Knight, tell me wh
I shall come, and I will give it you. Sir quoth
when I have convenient time I shall send for yo
The next day she sung in the same place, and
second Knight of the Emperors Court came by
way, who likewise was smitten in her love, a
he also promised her an hundred Florents; to wh
she made the like promise. The third day came
her another Knight, and unto him likewise
consented, and he promised her an hundred F
rents, if she should give him knowledge of
time. which she also promised. These three Knigh
having so secretly spoken with the Lady, that n
one of them had knowledge of one anothers comi
unto her. Now the Lady was deceitful, and ca
to her Husband, and said, Sir, I have a ser
matter to shew you, wherein if you follow
counsel, our poverty you may largely relieve. T
Knight replyed, tell it me, and I will keep it
secret as my life, and fulfil it to the utmost of
power. She answered three Knights of the E
perors Court have been with me one after anoth

in such wise, that none of them knoweth of anothers counsel, and each Knight offered me an hundred Florents. Might we an hundred Florents get, and no man know it, should not our poverty be well relieved? Then said the Knight, yea. therefore whatsoever you will counsel me, I shall willingly perform: then said she; I give you counsel, that when the Knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind the Gate with your Sword drawn, and as they come (being they come one after another) you shall slay them, and so we shall have the three hundred Florents they bring, without any man's knowledge: The Knight answered, O my best beloved wife, I fear this evil cannot be hid, and we shall therefore suffer death if it were known: She answered, I shall this work begin, and therefore make a good end, fear not. When the Knight saw she was so hardy, it caused him to be more bold; then she sent for the first Knight, and he came without tarrying, to the Gate, and knocked; and she asked if he had brought the hundred Florents? he answered I have brought them. Then she let him in, and he had no sooner entred but her Husband murthered him. Immediately came the second Knight and in like manner was slain. And not long after came the third Knight, whom also he slew. Having finished the butchery, they conveyed the murthered Bodies into a secret Chamber. When they had thus done, the Knight said unto the Lady, O dear Wife, if these dead bodies should be found with us, we shall die the most shameful

death that can be imagined, for it is not possible but these three Knights will be missed in the Emperor's Court, and great search will be made for them throughout the City. She answered and said, Sir Knight I have now this work begun and will make a good end, fear it not, I have laid. This Lady had a Brother which had the Government of the Wealth of the City, that on night watched in the Streets with his fellows: She came at the Gate, and called unto her Brother, and said, O my best beloved Brother, I have a secret matter, which I would not make it known, therefore come in with me, and I will relate it unto you. And when he was entred the House, the Lady received him friendly, and gave him Wine and said, my beloved Brother this is the cause I have called you, for I have much need of your good counsel. The Brother answered, speak boldly, and whatsoever I may do to my power, that be at your desire, without any letting. Then said she, yesterday came a Knight in friendship, but afterwards he fell into such variance with my husband that he slew him; and he lieth here dead in my Chamber: now my dear Brother, we have no man that we may trust, but only you: And if this dead body be found in our House, we shall be put to death. Now she mentioned but one. The Brother said, deliver him me in a Sack, and I will bear him to the Sea: she hearing that, was glad thereof, and delivered him the Body of the first Knight: he took it and went a good space and cast him therein: and as soon as this was

done, he came to his Sister, and said to her, Give me of the best Wine, for you are of him quit: and she gave him thanks, and went to her Chamber, as though she had gone for Wine, and began to cry aloud: The Knight that was cast into the Sea is come again. As her Brother heard that, he marvelled sore, and said, Give me him, I shall see if he will rise again, and took the second Knight (supposing it had been the Body of the first) and went to the Sea, and with a stone drowned him. That done, he went again to his Sister, and said, now fill me a Cup of good Wine, for I have drowned him so deep, that he shall never come again. Then said she, thanks be to God; and went again to her Chamber, and feigned to fetch Wine, and cried aloud, Alas he is risen again, and is come out of the Sea! and as her Brother heard that, with a great marvel, he said, what Devil is this that I have cast into the Water, and yet he is come again, deliver him me the third time, and I shall see if he will come again. Then she gave him the third Knight which he believed had been the first, and went without the City to a great Forrest, and made a great fire to cast him therein, and when he was almost burnt, the Brother went a little distance to do his need. Then came a Knight that was to ride to the City, where in the Morning should be a Turney and Justing: it was cold weather, and dark, and not far from the City; and when he saw the fire he drew thereto, and alighted and warmed him.

The

The Watchman came and ſaid, what art the
the Knight ſaid, I am a Knight. Then ſaid
Watchman thou art no Knight but a Devil,
I firſt caſt thee into the Water, then with a gr
ſtone I drowned thee, and the third time I
thee into this fire, ſuppoſing thou hadſt been bur
and yet thou ſtandeſt here: and then he tok
Knight with his Horſe, and caſt them both
the fire. After that he went unto his Siſter,
told what had happened, and ſaid, now bring
the beſt Wine; for after I had burnt him, I fou
him again by the fire with a Horſe, and have
them both into the fire; and by this his Si
perceived he had burnt a Knight of the Turk
who anon brought him the Wine abundant
and after he had well drunk, he departed the
Not long after, there fell a great contention bet
the Knight and his Wife, ſo that he ſmote h
and ſhe had indignation thereof, being angry,
ſaid that many heard her: O wretch! wilt t
kill me, as thou didſt the three Knights? th
men hearing that, laid hands on them, and bro
them to the Emperor; and the Woman confe
that her Husband had ſlain the three Knights
the Emperor's, and how he took from them t
hundred Florents. And it being ſo found,
were drawn at a Horſe-tail and hanged. T
ſaid the Maſter to the Emperor, have ye und
ſtood what I have ſaid? He anſwered right w
I ſay for certain, that Wife was the worſt Wom
that might be; for firſt ſhe moved him to m
ther, and after wards diſcovered him. The M

ſaid, without doubt it ſhall happen to you woꝛſe, if you put your Son to death by advice of your Wife. The Emperoꝛ ſaid, my Son ſhall not die this day. The Maſter hearing that, gave thanks to the Emperoꝛ and took leave, and went his way

The ſeventh Complaint of the Empreſs.

WHen the Empreſs heard the Emperoꝛ's ſon was yet living, as a mad woman, ſhe ran to the Emperoꝛ weeping, and ſaying, O unhappy woman! what ſhall I do? I muſt needs ſlay my ſelf that am aſhamed, and no puniſhment thereupon done. The Emperoꝛ anſwered, God defend that you ſhould have mind on ſuch a wicked deed; ſuffer a while and you ſhall have a good end. She anſwered, Sir, the end ſhall be evil; foꝛ of that ſhall follow us great confuſion. The Emperoꝛ ſaid, leave off ſuch talk. She ſaid, Loꝛd it ſhall come to you and to your Son, as to a King and his Steward. I pray tell that Example. She ſaid, I will gladly, but I fear you will hear me no moꝛe: Foꝛ next day the ſeventh Maſter ſhall ſpeak, and ſave your Son from death as the other ſix have done; and when your Son ſhall ſpeak, of whoſe woꝛds you ſhall have ſuch joy and delectation, that the love betwixt us ſhall be wholly foꝛgotten. The Emperoꝛ ſaid, that is impoſſible, foꝛ I ſhall never foꝛget your love.

Then ſaid ſhe, my beſt beloved Loꝛd, if it pleaſe you, I will tell you one Example by which you ſhall beware of many perils, eſpecially of your curſed Son, who intendeth to deſtroy me by his

Maſters. The Emperor ſaid, tell on. And
Empreſs began to tell as hereafter followeth.

The ſeventh Example of the Empreſs.

There was a King which loved his Wife
bove all things, inſomuch that he cloſed
within a ſtrong Caſtle, and bear the keys th
of himſelf: the Lady was therefore heavy
comfortleſs. Now in far Countrys there wa
vallant Knight, which lying on his Bed dre
ed he ſaw one of the faireſt Queens that ever
beheld, whoſe love above all others he deſired
obtain, and if he might ſee her walk he ſho'ld
tainly have ſome knowledge of her, by whom
him great Friendſhip and Honour ſhould co
To the Queen the ſame night by viſion of
ſame Knight, the like was alſo ſhewed, and
ye. they had no knowledge of each other, ne

of Name or Fame. When the Knight had thus dreamed, and seen (as he thought) a most vertuous and comely Lady, he determined that his feet should take no rest till he had found out the Lady, that in his Dream seemed so glorious: And having took horse, and all that was necessary for his journey, he travelled throughout divers Regions, Countreys, and Kingdoms, till at last he came into the Land where this Queen was by her jealous Husband kept in a strong Castle. When this Knight was come unto the City, and had for a season therein sojourned, it fell out, that as the Knight walked by the Castle, (and knew not as then, that the Queen was therein kept) she was at that time sitting in the Window to see the people pass by, and amongst others she espied the Knight and knew him to be the man of whom she had dreamed before: The Knight by chance lifted up his eyes, and perceived a Lady in a Window, and his mind gave him that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and she began a Song in Love. As he heard that, he was taken with her love. That Knight from thenceforth daily walked about the Castle beholding it all over, to espy if any way he might get in, to declare his mind unto her. The Lady perceiving that, presently endited a Letter, and secretly conveyed it unto him from the Casement of her Chamber-Window, which when he had perused, and understanding the will of the Lady, he began to haunt Justs and Tournaments and did perform so many marvellous Acts, that the fame of him came to the ears of the King:

and as ſoon as the King heard thereof, he ſent after him, and ſaid unto him, Sir Knight. I have heard that you have got much honour at our Juſts and Tournaments; wherefore if it pleaſe you to abide here and dwell with us, we ſhall give you large reward. The Knight anſwered, O mighty Prince I am your Servant, I would I could do any ſervice that would pleaſe you Magnificence, without taking any reward, ſave one thing before all other I deſire. The King ſaid, tell unto me boldly what that is. The Knight anſwered, my Lord, ſeeing that it hath pleaſed your moſt Excellent Majeſty to take me for your Servant, and one of your grave Counſel, it ſeemeth to me moſt expedient for both our delights, that I have a place near the Wall of the Caſtle, that I at all times might be more ready at your call when you need. The King anſwered, I conſent: make it as you think beſt. Then the Knight cauſed many Workmen to be brought, and having ſo done, he choſe out certain for his purpoſe, and cauſed them to build him a fair lodging near the Walls of the Tower: this being finiſhed, he made a Covenant with one of the Workmen (whom he thought fitteſt) to make a ſecret way to the Queens Lodgings: and when this was finiſhed, he killed the Workmen, becauſe he ſhould not make it known. Having thus done, he went in unto the Queen, and did her reverence as became him, and they diſcourſed of many matters. Having thus paſſed the day, the night drawing on, he deſired he might ſleep by her one night

but she often denyed him; yet nevertheless consented unto his request. Now they having spent the night in pleasure, and morning being come, the Knight returned to his Lodgings, and the Queen began to think with her self, what shall I do, if I should make my Husband acquainted herewith? two evils would come there; the one is my shame, and peradventure he would utterly forsake me, and cause me to be driven out of the Land for ever: The other is that he would slay the Knight, for death it is not possible for him to escape; therefore I think it more expedient to be secret therein then to reveal it. After that, the Knight as often as it pleased him, went in unto the Queen, and did his will with her; and she gave him a Ring which the King had given her at her Wedding. This Knight was so famous in Justing, that in every Battel and Tournament he had the Victory: For which cause he was in great favour with the King, so that he made him Steward and Governour over all his Land.

It happened on a day, that the King disposed to ride a hunting, and commanded his Steward to be ready on the morrow to go with him: whereupon he offered himself willingly. On the morrow they entred the Forrest, all day chasing the wild Beasts, and were so weary that the King sat down by a Fountain to rest, and the Knight by his side: The Knight was no sooner set but he fell asleep by the King, having the Ring on his finger, which the Queen had given him: which the King perceiving, knew it well. When

the

the Knight awaked, and perceiving the King h
seen the King, he feigned himself to be sore si
and said, my honoured Lord, I feel my self so ill
that if I do not haste me unto my Lodging, a
seek out some present remedy, either by Phys
or some other course, I am but a dead man, th
fore I pray you give me leave to go home.
whom the King made this answer: Go, de
Friend, in the Name of God, and see ther
nothing wanting to procure thy health that
Court or Kingdom can afford. The King
no sooner ended his Speech, but immediately
Knight took leave, and getting upon his ho
he hasted to his House; and as soon as she was co
home he alighted, and hasted to the Queens Lo
ings, and gave her the Ring again, and told
with all how the King had espyed it upon his
ger, when they were both sat down to rest: w
al he told her, that he feigned himself to be
sick, for which cause the King gave him leav
return to his Lodgings: he also prayed her,
if the King at any time should call for the Ri
she should shew it unto him. This done, he
his leave of her, and went again unto his Lodgi
Not long after the King came home to the Q
and she received him right lovingly; and aft
little time had passed, the King said unto
My Renowned Lady, shew me the Ring th
gave you, for I have a great desire to see it.
answered: O my best beloved Lord, why at
time do you desire to see it? then said he, if
shew it not to me incontinently, it shall re

you. Then she arose and went to her Cabinet, and took the Ring out of it: and having thus done, she brought it to her Husband: and when he had seen it, he was half ashamed and said, my best beloved Queen: O how like is that Knights Ring unto this, which I saw upon his finger! for I believe it had been mine, and that was the cause I did ask so hastily for it And of this suspition I yield my self guilty, my dear Lady in this behalf: The strength of the Tower deceived me, for I thought he none could get therein but my self alone, in regard none had the keeping of the keys but my self. She said unto him, my dear Lord, wonder not, for one Ring may be like another, and Workmen seldom make one piece of work, but others make the same: But God forgive you in that you have suspected me, for you know the strength of the Tower, and the keys you have always in your presence, and trust no man therewith. After that the Knight ordained a great Dinner, and said unto the King, My Sovereign, my Lady and Love is come from out of my Country to seek me, for whose sake I have ordained a Dinner, and would intreat your Highness to do me the Honour, as to dine with me this day, and take such Meat as shall be provided. The King answered, most willingly will I do you that worship, and more. The Knight was glad thereof, and by his secret way went unto the Queen and said unto her, My beloved Lady, you must do thus: come to my house the privy way, and cloath your self richly, and deck your self with Jewels, and other Orna-

ments, according to the custom of my Coun
then shall you sit at Table with my King, as
Sovereign Lady, and make good chær : She
plied, Sir Knight, I am ready to do accordin
your desire. When the time appointed was
and the King coming from the Castle tow
the Knights House, in the mean time by th
cret way the Quæn entred the Knights Lodg
(before the King could come) and apparelled
self after the manner of the Knights Coun
When the King entred the House, the
Courtly Salutations received him ; and
the King had beheld her, he demanded o
Knight what Woman she should be that sæm
fair ? Then answered the Knight, my reno
Lord, it is my Sovereign Lady, that for th
she beareth me, is come out of my Country
me, to know why I should absent my self so
from her love and service. The Spæches
ended, the Knight caused the King to sit do
the Table, and made the Quæn to sit by
The King thought it was his Queen, and
within himself, O how like is this Woma
to my Wife ? So the strength of the
still deceived him, that he gave more credit
the Knights words, than to his own eyes.
Quæn began to talk to the King, and for
him to eat and drink, and make good cheer : a
the King heard the voice, he said unto himself
blessed Lord, how like is this Woman to
Queen in her behaviour, speech, visage, and
other conditions! and still the strength of

Tower deceived him. In the end of the Feast the Knight prayed his beloved Lady to sing before the King; and she began to sing a Song of Love. When the King heard her he knew her voice, and thought unto himself, is not this my Wife? and yet how can this be, I having the keys of the Tower my self in keeping? so all Dinner time the King sat debating thus within himself. Dinner ended, he willed the Knight forthwith to take up the Table, he having urgent occasions that moved him thereunto, for he was sore troubled in mind. Whereupon the Knight said, My Lord, what is the reason you are so melancholy? What is that discontenteth you? be not troubled, if it please you, we shall make you some pleasant sport. And the Gentlewoman said, my beloved Lord if it please you with us to abide, we shall make you all the delight that this place can afford; if your Queen her self was here, she could not give you more content. Whereupon the King began to be angry, and said, take away the Table, for I may no longer abide here, untill that I have resolved my mind Thereupon the Knight straightway obeyed the King, and took up the Table, giving thanks to all, but especially to the King his Sovereign Lord and Master.

Now the King departed, and went with all haste into the Castle, to see whether that his Queen were therein or not: But in the mean time she went in at the Privy door, and stripped off her uppermost Vesture, and put her self into the same habit the King left her attired

tired with. When the King entred therein, he found the Quæn in the same cloathing he had left her before; and seeing all fell out contrary to his expectation, he kindly embraced her, and lovingly kissed her, and said unto her, This day have I eaten bread my Knight and with his loving Lady, who came of her Country unto my Court to find him out, who being met and overjoyed in the sight of him did presently ordain a great Feast, and humbly treated me to do him so much Grace, as to accompany him at his Feast. Whereupon I answered him that for the love I did bear him, I would do him that honour, and much more, if requested: whom I being beheld, she seemed to me so fair, that since I was born, mine eyes have not seen one so fair as she is to you, insomuch that all dinner time I was troubled with many matters, and could hardly endure unto the end of the Feast, but that I must come to see whether you were here or there.

Then the Queen answered him, O mighty King wherefore do you mistrust me, having often found the contrary? Do you not know that this Tower is so fast, strong, and invincible, that no man can enter in or out, without your knowledge? for you always keep the keys, and will not trust them therewith, how then is it possible I should be there? you may find one man like another, You remember of late how you did mistake the Knight for King: and have you more Arguments of suspition against me? Was it not sufficient to debar me of liberty these many years, but you must needs be jealous besides? I tell you, O noble King,

you do not forsake your jealousie, and release me out of imprisonment before three days be expired, I will end my days herein; for I had rather live a Servant at Liberty, than a Queen in Prison. The King answered, all that you have objected is true, of which I acknowledge my self guilty; wherefore have patience for a few days, and as sure as I reign King of this Country, I will set you at liberty, and so he lovingly embraced her with a kiss, and returned to his own Lodgings. Now he had not rested above two days, but the Knight came and said unto the King, O my honourable Lord, I have long served your Highness, now it is time I return into my own Country; and for all the service that I have done unto you, I desire nothing but this one thing before my departure: which is, to give to me before the Priest, with your own hand, in the Church, my beloved Lady, whom I intend to wed, who followed me out of far Countries for love, and whom I shall bring thither again, as my lawful and true Wife, which will be to my great honour when I come into my Country. The King answered, that Petition and more than that (if you will desire it) will I gladly fulfil. Then the King required the day of Marriage: when the good King came to Church honourably attended, the Priest was ready (adorned with his Vestments) to solemnize the Patrimony. The Knight apparelled the Queen in his own House, after the manner of his own Country, and ordained two Knights to lead her to the Church, who believed

it had bæn his Paramour. When they were come to the Church, the Priest said, who shall give this Woman to this Knight? The King said, I shall give her unto her own Knight; and took her by the hand, and said O good Woman you are so like my Quæn, that my love is to you the greater, and also because you shall be wedded to this Knight whom I affect above all men, and you shall be of my House, and so put the Quæns hand into the Knights; and the Priest after the Order of the Church, bound them, and wedded them together in true and faithful Wedlock. When all these Rites were finished, the Knight said unto the King, O most noble Lord, the Ship that I intend to go in towards my Country is now furnished for my journey, and ready to sail away; wherefore I humbly beseech your Noble Grace to accompany my beloved Wife thereunto, and that you would admonish her to love me, and have me in favour above all others living, and the much the rather for your good counsel. The King with his followers (besides others) did accompany them unto the Ship, for whose departure many were exceeding sorrowful and heavy. Then the King began to say unto the Quæn, My dear friend, hearken well unto my Counsel, and see that ye follow it, for it shall be to your profit: my most honoured and beloved Knight hath now wedded and done to you all the honour that in him is; wherefore look that you love, honour, and obey him above all other men, as God hath commanded, and that you be unto him true in

your

your dealings. As ſoon as this Speech was ended, he delivered her unto the Knight, ſaying, my bleſſing be with you both, and our Lord keep and conduct you ſafely unto your own Country. Then the Knight and the Queen bowed their heads to the King, and gave him thanks for all the kindneſs that he had done them; and having ſo done, they committed him to the Almighty, and entred into the Ship,; the Mariners hoiſted ſail before the Wind, and within a ſhort ſpace the King loſt ſight of the Ship, and thence going haſtily into the Caſtle, he went to ſeek for his Queen; and when he could not find her, he was moved over all the parts of his body, and ſought about all the Tower, ſo long till at laſt he found out the hole that the Knight had cauſed to be made; and when he ſaw that, he wept bitterly, and crying out, Alas, alas, This Knight in whom I had ſo great confidence, hath robbed me of my Wife! was I not a Fool, that gave more faith unto the words of a Knight than to mine own eyes.

Then ſaid the Empreſs, my Lord, have you underſtood what I have ſaid? The Emperor ſaid, as well as may be. Then anſwered the Empreſs, Remember how he truſted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceived him: in like manner do you truſt the Seven Wiſe Maſters, who labour to deſtroy me your Wife: and you give more credit to their words than to your own eyes: for you have ſeen how your ungracious Son hath rent and ſcratched me, whereof yet I bear tokens and marks about me, as you may ſee, alſo you know well

well how your accurſed Son hath ſhamed me, and you mark not how they defend him in this folly. Therefore it is to be feared that it will happen to you worſe than to the King of whom I have ſpoken unto you.

The Emperor replyed, I will believe mine own Eyes before I will give credence to thy words, and therefore to morrow I ſhall do juſtice upon my Son. The next day the Emperor commanded his Son to be brought before him, which being done, he commanded him to be led to the place of Execution, there to ſuffer death according to the Law. Then there began to arise great noiſe and bewailing amongſt the common people, for the death of the Emperors only Son. At laſt when the ſeventh Maſter heard it, he ran immediately unto the Officers which were leading him to the Gallows, and ſaid, my Friends I pray you not to make overmuch haſte, but hold your hands a while, for I think this day (with the help of the Almighty God) to ſave him from all perils: and from thence the Maſter hath him to the Emperor's Palace, and did him reverence according to his accuſtomed duty: But the Emperor with great indignation made him this anſwer, never more have you any joy in the world, for that you have ſent my Son home untaught and dumb, whom I delivered unto you well ſpeaking; for which cauſe you ſhall be all put to death with him. The Maſter anſwered, O most noble Emperor, the time is not long betwixt this and to morrow noon; then (by the grace of God

you shall hear him speak discreetly, and shall declare the truth of all things, and this I promise you he will perform to the full upon pain of my life, if you will spare him so long time: if you find it not so, then take my life, and the lives of us all. Then said the Emperor, if I might but hear my Son speak, it would give me sufficient content, and I would not desire longer to live. Then answered the Master, all this and more you shall hear and see, and confess it to be true, if you will but abide this little time, and then the strife that hath been betwixt us and the Empress will clearly be decided. And if you suffer him to be put to death through the words of your most ungodly Wife, I tell you of a truth it shall happen worse to you than it did to a Knight that died for a little blood that he saw his Wife to bleed, to whom afterwards she was most unnatural: then said the Emperor, that Example would I fain hear. Then said the Master, let your Son be called again, and I shall tell you so notable Example, that during your life you may beware of the unstableness of Women. Then the Emperor said, I shall, go call my Son again, upon condition, that to morrow I shall hear him speak as you have promised: the Master said, do that my Lord, for it shall be so, and began to tell as followeth.

The

The Example of the seventh Master.

There was a Knight that had a fair young Wife, whom he loved entirely, so that he could not be out of her sight. It happened one time that they played together at Chess, and the Knight by chance had a Knife in his hand, and he fortuned to smite her hand on the Knife, so that a little blood began to appear. When the Knight saw his wife bleed, he fell to the ground in a swound; his wife seeing that, cast cold water in his Face, insomuch that he came a little to himself

and said, lightly call the Curate with the holy Sacrament, for I must die; for the blood that I have seen come from your finger hath smitten death to my heart: Then the Priest came, and comforted him much, and administred the Sacrament unto him, and anon he died: for whose death there was great sor-

grow, especially by his Wife: also after the obsequies were finished, she went and lay upon the Grave, and there made great lamentation, and said, she would never depart thence, but as a Turtle-Dove she would for the love of her Husband there abide and die. Then went her Friends and Neighbours unto her, and said, what availeth this for his Soul, to live here weeping untill you die? It is better that you go home, and there give Alms for the love of God, and that shall more avail your Soul, then in this place to abide. To whom she answered, I pray you hold your peace. you are evil counsellors, consider ye not, how I am from him separated by death, for a little blood he saw come out of my finger? therefore I shall never from hence depart.

Her Friends hearing that, made her a little house nigh the Grave, and putting therein all things necessary, went their ways thinking within a while she should be weary to be alone, and so desolate from all company, and thereby desire again the company of the people.

In the City was then a Law, that if an Offender against the Law were hanged, the Sheriff all night should watch the dead body armed; and if it happened that the body hanged were stoln, the Sheriff should lose all his Lands, and his life at the Kings pleasure. It happened soon after the Knight was dead, that a man should be hanged for trespassing, so that the Sheriff all that night watched by the Gallows, not far from the City, and the Church-yard was not far from the same

ſame: then began the Sheriff to be ſo cold, that he could not poſſibly endure it, but was even ready to die, except he might ſpædily warm him: it was ſo extream cold, and ſo great a Froſt: and by chance he eſpying a fire in the Church-yard, he haſted and came thereto, and when he was come near to it, he knocked at the little hous[e]. The woman ſaid, who at this time knocketh at the houſe of the ſorrowful woman? He anſwered, I am the Sheriff that hath endured much cold, and am ready to freeze to death, unleſs without delay I may let me warm my ſelf? ſhe ſaid unto him, I am ſorry if that I let you in, ye ſhould cauſe me to be put to heavy. He ſaid, I promiſe you, that I ſhall ſpeak no words to your diſpleaſure. Then ſhe let him in; and when he had ſitten a while by the fire, and was well warmed, he ſaid unto her, O fair Woman, with your licence, would I fain ſpeak but one word with you. She anſwered, Sir, ſpeak what pleaſeth you. Then he ſaid, O Lady, you ſeem to be a fair Gentlewoman, rich and young, wherefore is it not more convenient for you to dwell at home, and to give Alms, then to waſt your ſelf here in weeping? She ſaid, Sir Knight had I known you this before, you had not come in; for I ſay unto you, as I have ſaid to others oftentimes, you know that my Husband loved me ſo well, that for a little blood he ſaw me bleed out of my finger, he is dead: wherefore I will here die for the love of him. As the Knight heard this, he took leave and went again unto the Gallows; and when he was come thither, and ſaw that the Thief (he left there hanging

hanging) was ſtoln away, he began to wax hea-
vy, and ſaid, wo is me, what ſhall I do! for I
have loſt my life, and all my goods: and going
up and down thus full of ſorrow, he knew not
what way to turn himſelf: at laſt he concluded
to go to the deſolate Lady, and ſhew her the hea-
vineſs of his heart, to wit, if ſhe could give him
any good counſel: When he was come thither,
he called, and ſhe asked him the cauſe: And he
ſaid, Madam, I am the Sheriff that was right
now with you, and I would fain ſhew you the
ſecrets of my heart, therefore I pray you open
the door. And he went in, and ſaid unto her, O
moſt vertuous Lady, I am now come to have your
advice; for you know the Laws of the Land are,
that when any man is hanged and ſtoln off the
Gallows, the Sheriffs life and goods are in the
Kings hands: now it happened while I was
there, and warmed me, the Thief was ſtolen; there-
fore I pray fair Lady, for the love of God, give
me your beſt advice what to do. She anſwered
I have compaſſion upon you, for by the Law
you have loſt your life and goods to the King,
do now after my counſel, and ye ſhall loſe nei-
ther: he anſwered, I am to you greatly bound,
hoping to have good comfort. She ſaid, will
you then promiſe to make me your Wife? the
Knight anſwered, would God you were indeed ſo
minded; but I fear you diſdain to humble your
ſelf unto ſo poor a Knight: ſhe ſaid, I give you my
will there; and he gave her again his will, and
relented to be her Knight during his life. Then

ſaid

said she, ye know such a day my Lord was buri
which for the love of me died, take him out of
sepulchre, and hang him up instead of the Thi
The Knight answered, Lady your counsel is
good; then went they and opened the Sepulch
and drew him out. The Knight answered unto
Lady, how shall we now do? because e're the T
was hanged two of his teeth were smitten
and I fear me if that were perceived I shall di
death. Then the Lady, said take a stone and
out two of his Teeth. The Knight answered,
dam that may not I do, for while he lived he
my trusty Friend, and it should be to me
rebuke to do so disloyal a deed to his Body, b
dead. She answered, for your love I shall
and presently took a stone, and smote out
of his Teeth, and said to the Sheriff, take him
hang him upon the Gallows like the Thief.
Knight said, I fear to do it, for the Thief in
ing was wounded upon his Head and he la
his Ears. O Madam, God forbid that I
to the dead body, that I loved so well in his
Then said she, give me your Sword, and I
for your Love do it, and so took the Sw
and smote a manly stroak on the forehead,
cut off his Ears, and when she had thus done,
said now hang him. Then the Knight ans
ed, yet I fear to hang him, for the Thief w
ed both his Stones, and if he be searched
not found without, all my labour is lost.
said she, I never saw man so fearful, seeing the
ter is losure: Take a knife, and cut off his Sto

And he answered, that I may not do in any wise, and therefore I pray you spare me, for you know what a Man is without his Stones. She said, for the love of you I shall do it, and took the knife and cut off her Husband Stones, and said, now take the Churl thus disfigured, and hang him up without dread: and they went both, and hung the Body upon the Gallows: and so was the Sheriff delivered. Then said the Lady, now ye are delivered from all dangers by my Counsel, therefore I desire you (according to promise) that ye wed me. The Knight said, I have made a vow that I shall never wed other so long as I live, which I shall perform: Then he said, O thou most shameful and worst of all Women, who would take thee to Wife? an honourable and loving Knight was thy Husband, who for a little blood that he saw issue out of thy finger died. Now hast thou smitten out two of his Teeth, cut off his Ears and Stones, and made a great wound in his Head; what Devil would marry thee? therefore thou shalt never shame good man more. I will rid thee of thy life, and so drew his Sword, and with one stroke, smote off her head.

Then the Master said unto the Emperor: My Lord, have you understood what I have said? He answered, right well: Amongst all women this was the worst, and the Knight rewarded her accordingly, that she should no more do shame. The Emperor said, moreover good Master, might I but hear my Son speak, I should have no care of

my

my self. Then said the the Master, to morrow [illegible] shall hear him speak, and he shall shew the [illegible] of all the variances betwixt us and the Empe[illegible] as I hope, and so took leave of the Emperor a[illegible] departed.

How DIOCLESIAN, the Emperor's [illegible] complained on the Empress; and how he e[illegible] sed himself to her Complaint.

After that, all the Masters took counsel [illegible] they should bring the Child out of Pris[illegible] and lead him to the Palace; so they went to [illegible] Child in Prison before mid-day, his counsel [illegible] hear: to whom the Child said, what you [illegible] shall please, but muse not your selves how I [illegible] answer, or what I shall say; for with joy I [illegible] answer all that shall be demanded of me. [illegible] the Seven Wise Masters heard that, they [illegible] exceeding joyful, and cloathed him in Purple [illegible] Cloth of Gold; and two of the Masters [illegible] before him, one on his right hand, and another [illegible] his left, and the other three followed him, [illegible] before all went twelve men with Instruments [illegible] Musick, who brought him with great melody [illegible] the Palace. When the Emperor heard the me[illegible] dy, he demanded what it was? then it was [illegible] him by the standers by, saying, Mighty Empe[illegible] it is your Son which cometh before you, and [illegible] fore all your Lords, to speak and excuse himself [illegible] of all that is laid to his charge. The Empe[illegible] said, that is good tydings if I might hear my S[illegible] speak. And when the Child was come into [illegible]

Palace, he rode to his Father, and said unto him: Hail my most dear and Royal Father.

And when the Emperor heard the voice of his Son, he was so glad, that for joy he fell to the earth, but his Son hasted to take up his Father again, and when he came to himself, then began the Son to declare the whole matter to his Father: and there came so great a multitude to the Palace to hear the Child speak, and the noise of them was so great, that the Child could not be

heard. The Emperor considering that, caused Money to be thrown into the Streets, that the People therewith should be hasted out of the Palace, the better to hear the Child speak: but they regarded not the Money. When the Emperor perceived that, he commanded silence on pain of death:

And when they were all still, he began to speak
followeth: O most dear Father, before I sp
any thing, I entreat you, that the Empress w
all her Chamber-Maids may be present. So
Emperor commanded the Empress with all
Maids to come without delay. The Emp
hearing (in great fear) came with her Mai
and the Child bad them to stand before the pe
on a row, that he might see them. Then
the Child, Sir, behold the Chamber-Maid
standeth there in green (whom ye know the E
press loveth above all others) command her
uncloathed before us all, and see what she is.
Emperor said, dear Son, that would shame us
to have a woman stand naked before us; he
if it be a woman it is my shame; if not, let
shame abide in her. When she was uncloa
she appeared to be a man, whereat they wonder

The Complaint of the Emperors Son, on the Empress.

Then said the Son unto the Father, be
this Ribauld hath many a night lain
your Wife in your Chamber, and hath de
your Bed, and him the Empress loved abo
others, which thing you did not know.

When the Emperor had seen these things
with great indignation gave command that
the Empress and Ribauld should be burnt;

the Son answered, My Lord and Father, make no haste to give judgment, till I have reproved her for the grievous slanders she did falsly accuse me of, and declared how unjustly she hath complained of me, and sought all means how to take my life. Then said the Emperor, my dear Son, I commit all the judgment into your hands. The Son answered, if she be found a Lyar the Law shall give sentence against her: but my Royal Father, when you sent for me, at her earnest request, then I with my Masters beheld the stars, by which I perceived, that if I should have spoken unto you, or any living creature within the space of seven days, I should have died a most shameful death, and for that cause only I did forbear to speak until this present.

And whereas the Empress most unjustly hath accused me, that I would have ravished her, therein she lyeth falsly, for she most adulterously provoked me to defile the Bed of my most gracious Lord and Father the Emperor. And when she in no wise could bring me thereto, she took Pen, Ink, and Paper, and bad me write the cause wherefore I would not yield. And when I had written the cause thereof, and how I would not my Father's Orchard defile; then she began to tear her Cloaths, and scrath her Visage, so that it gushed forth with blood, and cryed with a loud voice, This your Son (having a mind full of lust) would have wronged your Princely Bed, and I resisting his Lust, most inhumanely hath he torn

my flesh. When the Emperor heard this, he
held her with a full countenance, and said in
manner, O wretched Woman, was not thy
bauld sufficient to fulfill thy foul and letcher
appetite, but wouldest also have made my Son
Then fell the Empress at the Emperors feet,
tryed for mercy. The Emperor said, O
curled and unhappy Woman, thou askest for
ness, but are worthy of none, for thou hast de
ted to die in three respects: first, in that thou
committed Adultery: secondly, in that thou
lascivioufly hast provoked my Son to a most
minable sin, and laid the crime falsly and unj
upon him: Thirdly and lastly, in that thou
every day incited me by thy false Tales to
my Son to death: therefore the Law shall
its course against thee, and condemn thee to
as thou hast deserved.

Then answered his Son, Most Noble Fat
you know well that for her leasings I was
ly led to hanging: But my Masters with
help of God hath delivered me. O my mos
nourable Lord and Father, it was told you by
Empress, that I should also (by the help o
Masters) depose you; and that I did labour
all means to destroy you, and to sit in
Throne; Would you not then have much gr
ed? Have you not the whole command and
vernment of this your Kingdom? Wherefore
should not I use all the skill I have to help
my most honoured Father, rather then any

to destroy you? and seeing from you I have my living, I will repute you my Sovereign Lord and Father, during my life, and not in any manner deprive you of your Honour, but busie my self about governing the same, and all your commands I shall fulfil: but it is as the Father that cast his Son into the Sea to drown him, because he said he should live to be a greater Lord than his Father was, and yet the Son by providence was saved, and became greater then his Father, and yet was no hindrance to him, but profited them much: also you see, that my life and carriage is never like to hinder you, but shall be to your comfort. Then said the Emperor, blessed be the Almighty God, and the hour I begat thee, and desired such a Son, that I find so expert in all things; tell me an Example, by which we may perfectly understand thy wisdom, and my heart the better to enjoy thee.

Then said the Son, honourable Father, command first silence to be made, that I be not letted till I have done: and when that is ended, give Sentence according to Law upon me and the Empress. Then commanded the Emperor silence; and the Child began to tell in ample manner, as followeth.

The Example of DIOCLESIAN the Emperors Son.

There was a Knight which had but one Sonne that he loved right dear in the beginning as ye have loved me, whom he delivered to a Maiſter that dwelt in a far Country, to be brought up in learning and knowledge. This Child as he waxed in years, encreaſed in wiſdom & knowledge

very much. And when he had been with his Maiſter ſeven years, his Father deſired to ſee him, and ſent Letters that he ſhould come again into his Country, and viſit his Friends, as you ſent for me. The Child was obedient to his Father and came

came: at whose coming he did exceedingly joy, for that he was grown as well in comeliness of Body, as in Doctrine and Learning, and to every man appeared pleasant and gentle.

It happened upon a day that the Father and Mother sitting at the Table, the Child serving them, a Nightingale came flying before the Window where they sate, and began to sing so swetly that they marvelled; And the Knight said, O how swetly this Bird singeth! Well were he that could understand his Song, and shew the interpretation thereof. Then said the Son, my worshipfull Father, the Song of this Nightingale I could declare, but I fear your displeasure. The Father said, say boldly my Son the interpretation of the Bird, and ye shall prove whether I be angry or not, but I shall mark well the cause of my anger. When the Son heard that, he said, the Nightingale saith in her Song, That I shall become a great Lord, honoured of all men, namely of my Father, who shall bring me water to wash, and my Mother shall hold the Towel. The Father said, thou shalt never have such service of us, nor such dignity shall follow thee, and in great madness and wodness he took his Son upon his shoulders, and ran to the Sea, and cast him in, and said, lie there Interpreter. The Child could swim, and swimming to Land, where he was four days without Meat or drink: the fifth day there came a Ship, and as the Child

saw that, he called to the Ship-men, and said, [illegible] the love of God deliver me from death. [illegible] Ship-men saw it was a fair young man, and [illegible] compassion on him, and with the Boat fetched him aboard, and carried him into a far Country and sold him to a Duke. The Child grew very proper and fair, and the Duke loved him, and had him greatly in favour.

Upon a time the King of that Realm called the great Lords and Noblemen within the Realm together, to sit in Council. This Duke [illegible] prepared to go to the said Council; and giving great regard to the wisdom of the Child, took the Child with him And when they were assembled before the King and his Counsel: My well beloved Lord and Friends, said the King, will you know the cause wherefore I have assembled you? They answered, we all are (Sovereign Lord) at your command. Then said the King, it is a sign that I shall shew you: if any man can declare what it signifieth, I swear unto him by my Crown I will give him my only Daughter in Marriage and he shall be my fellow in the Realm so long as I live. and after my death shall possess my whole Kingdom. And the Mystery is this.

The Ravens follow me still wheresoever I go crying out with such horrible voices, that the pain is grievous for me to hear them, and much more to behold their looks: wherefore if there be any man which knoweth the cause of this their earnest following of me, and can show what they mean by their cry-

crying, and avoid them away from me, without doubt I shall fulfil this promise that I have made. And as the King had thus said, there was none found in all the Council, that understood the cause, or could drive away the Ravens. Then said the Child unto the Duke, my Lord, think you the King will perform what he hath promised? Will you, said the Duke, that I give the King knowledge of what you can do? Then the Child said, I will my life pledge that I shall make good what I have said. When the Duke heard that, he went to the King and said, my Lord and King, here is a young man that doth promise to satisfie you, in all that you desire touching these Ravens, if you will fulfil what you have promised. The King swore by the Crown of his Kingdom, the which I have promised shall be fulfilled. Then he brought the Child before the King, and when the King beheld him, he spoke unto him after this manner: O fair Child, can you answer this my question? the Child answered, Yea, my Lord, and that in the best manner: Your question is, Wherefore the Ravens follow you, and horribly call upon you? To which I answer: It happened, that there were two Ravens, a Male and a Female, that brought out between them a third Raven: and in that place there was great Famine and scarcity of all manner of Food, that Men, Beasts, and Fowls died for want. Now the third Raven was at that time very

very young, and not able to fly abroad, to g
her living: the Female she left it, seeking ho
she might get her own living, and came no m
to the Feast. The Male seeing that, with gre
penury and labour fed the young Raven till
was able to fly: and when the Dearth was go
the Female Raven returned home again to
young Raven, and would accompany with him
but the Male seing that, would have driven
away, saying, she in his great necessity left
company, and therefore now he should have
fellowship with her. She alledged, that she
in his hatching great labour and sorrow, and
fered much penury, and for that cause she sho
rather enjoy his company than the Male.

For this cause, my Sovereign Lord, they
low you, asking which of them shall have co
pany with the young Raven, and this is
cau e of this horrible clamour that they m
daily unto you. But my honoured Lord, wh
you have given sentence, you shall never m
be troubled with their crying. Then answe
the King, because the Female hath forsaken
young Raven in his necessity, it standeth
justice that he should not follow him, but do wi
out his fellowship. And whereas she saith, sh
in hatching and bringing forth the had gre
pain and travel, that helpeth not, for her p
was turned into joy, as soon as she saw the yo
Raven in the world. But in regard the Male
the cause of the generation of every Beast of
earth

earth, and every Fowl of the air; and also because the young Raven in his necessity was sustained and fed by the Male, therefore I conclude both for judgment and sentence definitive, that the young Raven shall abide with the Male, and not the Female.

When the Ravens heard that sentence, with great noise and cry, they flew up into the air, and were no more seen in all the Region.

This done, the King demanded of the young man what his name was? he answered, I am called Alexander: Then said the King, I will that you grant me one request, which is, that from henceforth you take me and none other for your Father; for you shall have my Daughter to Wife, and the whole Government and posses-

sion

tion of my Realm. Young Alexander abo
still there with the King, and every Man did ex
ceedingly love him; for he began to haunt Ju
and Tourneys, wherein he always won th
Prize before all other in Egypt, so that his pe
was not to be found, neither was there so ha
a question put to him, but he could make know
the true sence and meaning thereof.

At that time there was an Emperor nam
Titus, who excelled in courtesie and curiosity a
other Emperors, Kings, and Princes, in th
World; insomuch that such Fame flew over th
World of it, that whosoever would profit in vi
ning, manners, or behaviour, must go to th
Emperors Court. When Alexander heard ther
of, he said to the King, my most honourabl
Lord and Father, you know that the wor
is full of fame of the Emperor, that it is ho
delectable to abide in his Court, wherefore,
it please you my renowned Lord and Father,
would very gladly go to his Court that I m
obtain more wisdom, and grow more prompt i
Manners and Behaviour than now I am
Whereupon answered the King: it pleaseth m
right well; but take with you plenty of Gol
and Silver, and other necessaries, that yo
my Honour there may save, and have also th
which to you is most requisite and necessary.
it seemeth unto me most expedient, that before you
departure you do marry my Daughter.

The

Then answered Alexander. Will it please you my Lord to spare me at this time, and at my return I shall wed her with all honour unto her appertaining. The King answered, Since it is your will to go unto the Emperors Court, I give my consent: Then Alexander took his leave of the King, and took with him abundance of Treasure, and went to the Emperors Court; where, when he was come, with many followers, he went before the Emperor, and fell upon his Knees, and did him Reverence.

The Emperor rose from his Seat Imperial, and killed him, and asked whence, and what he was, and wherefore he was come; He answered, I am Son and Heir to the King of Egypt, and am come to serve your most high Majesty, if it please you to accept of me. The Emperor said he was heartily welcome, and committed him to his Steward, and made him his Carver, The Steward ordained him a fair Chamber; and provided all things that were necessary to the same; and Alexander behaved himself so well, that in short time he was beloved of all people.

Not long after, came the Kings Son of France to serve the Emperor, and to learn good qualities and comely behaviour: him the Emperor received honourably, demanding his name; and of what kindred he was come: he answered I am Son to the King of France, and I have to name Lodowick your Servant: Then said the Emperor, I have made Alexander my Carver, and you shall

shall be my Cup-bearer, that always ye m
serve at my Table; and commanded the Stewa
to assign him a lodging, whom he placed wi
Alexander. These two were so like in stature
visage, and condition, that hardly the one mig
be known from the other, but that Alexand
was more cunning then Lodowick, for he w
Feminine and shamefaced; and these young m
loved well.

The Emperor had only one Daughter nam
Florentine, right fair and gracious, that sh
be his Heir, whom he loved intirely; she ha
Court and Servants assigned; to her the Em
ror every day accustomed to send from his Ta
of his Dainties, in token of love, by Alexand
insomuch that the Daughter began to have
marvellously in her favour, because of his w
and comely behaviour.

Upon a day Alexander had such business
he served not at the Table, nor any other in
room: Lodowick perceiving that, served for h
and as soon as he had served in his last serv
upon his knee, the Emperor commanded him
bear a Dish to his Daughter, as he was wo
thinking he was Alexander. Then Lodow
went to the Emperors Daughter, saluting h
with great Reverence, and set the meat bef
her; till then he had not seen her. She perce
ing it was not Alexander, said to him, What
your name, and whose Son are you? He an
ed her, Madam, I am the Kings Son of Fra

and my name is Lodowick: she said, I thank you for your pains, and then he departed. In the mean time came Alexander to the Table, and they fulfilled their Service.

Dinner being done, Lodowick went to bed sore sick: Alexander perceiving that, went to his Chamber, and said unto him, O my best beloved Friend and Fellow, how is it with you, and what is the cause of your infirmity? He answered, the cause I know not, but I am sore sick, and fear I cannot escape death. Alexander said, the cause of your infirmity I know well; for to day as you bear the meat to the Emperors Daughter, ye beheld her beauty so fervently, that your heart was ravished with her love. Whereupon he answered, O Alexander, all the Physicians in the World could not more truly judge my sickness, but I fear it will be my death. Then said Alexander, be of good comfort, I will help you unto my power, and forthwith went to a Merchant, and bought with his own Money a fair Cloth, set with precious Stones, unknown to Lodowick, and presented it in his behalf to the Princes: As soon as she beheld it, she asked where he had that costly Cloth? he said, Madam, of the Son of the most Christian King of France, who sendeth it you for your love: for he having but once beheld your Princely Face, is grown sick even to death; wherefore if you suffer him to perish, you will never recover honour.

Then

Then said she, God Alexander would
counsel me to lose my Virginity? God defe
that; and be sure Alexander that for such
sages you shall never win thanks of me: there
fore go out of my sight, and speak no more there
of. When Alexander heard that, did obeysan
and departed.

The next day Alexander went again to
City, and bought a Chaplet that was twice
vaule of the Cloth, and went to the Pyncel
Chamber and gave it her on the behalf of Lod
wick. And when she saw that costly gift,
said unto him, I marvel that so often you ha
seen and spoken with me, and have not d
your own errand in speaking for your self,
for another. Then answered he, O Madam
have not done so, because my birth is not to
compared to yours: also my heart was never
wounded: and he that hath a good fellow,
bound for to do him true fellowship. And there
fore now excellent Pyncels, of your most abu
dant pity have compassion on him, and
whole that you have so sore wounded,
not for ever laid to your cruelty and hardness
heart; she answered him, go your way, for at
time I will give you no answer, and as he he
that he departed.

And the third day he went to the City,
bought a Girdle that was of more value,
costlier then the Chaplet was, and presented
to her in the behalf of Lodowick: and when
beh

beheld that gift so precious, she said unto Alexander, say to Lodowick, that if he come to my Chamber about the third hour in the night, and he shall find the door open: And Alexander hearing that, was glad, and went to his fellow and said, my best beloved fellow be of good comfort, for I have conquered the Princess to you, and this night I shall bring thee to her Chamber. And when that was said, he started up as though he had awaked out of his sleep, and was well revived, and for great joy became well: the next night Alexander took Lodowick and brought him to the Chamber of the Lady, with whom he was in solace all night: and from that time forth all her mind was upon him, so that there was but one love between them both.

And after that, Lodowick used many times to visit her, so that in Process of time it came to the ears of the Knights and Gentlemen of the Court, how that the Emperors Daughter was known by Lodowick: and they conspired among themselves how they might find him and intrap him, so as to take him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, he armed him to withstand them; and when the Knights understood that, they feared Alexander and suffered his fellow to go in peace. Alexander many times put himself in jeopardy for him, he not knowing thereof; but the Princess knew it well.

In short time after, came Letters to Alexander of the death of the King of Egypt, that he should hastily come and receive his Kingdom with Honour and Joy; and that shewed he unto the Princess and to Lodowick, and also of his departing; wherefore they were sorrowful: he said also to the Emperor, my honourable Lord, pleaseth it you to understand, I have received Letters of the death of my Father, wherefore behoveth me to go and receive the Kingdom, and that you will be pleased to give me leave to depart; and for all the benefits to me done, I offer my self and all my goods: and rather than I should by my going, any way displease you my Lord, I will forsake all my Realm, and abide with you still.

Then said the Emperor, know you for certain that for your departure I am right heavy, for you were the best Servant in my Court: but becometh not an Emperor to hinder his Servants from their advancements, but rather promote them to higher honour: therefore go you unto our Treasurer, and he shall deliver you as much Gold as you will have, and in the Name of God (and my blessing) go into your Country. Thus Alexander had leave of the Emperor, and bad him farewell: and they were also sorrowful for his departure, for he was beloved of all.

Lodowick with the Princess brought him on his way seven miles at least: after that Alexander would not suffer them to go any further

then fell they both to the ground with great heavi-neſs. And Alexander took and lifted him up and comforted him with fair words, and ſaid, O Lodowick, my beſt beloved fellow! I warn you that the ſecrets betwixt you and my Lady, you hide as privily as you may, and take good heed to all things; for I wot another ſhall come and be in my ſtead, that ſhall envy you of the Favour and Grace that you ſtand in with the Emperor, and day and night ſhall lie in wait to take you in a fault, and to put you to rebuke. Then anſwered Lodowick, and ſaid, O Alexander, I ſhall beware as much as is poſſible. but how ſhall I do when I ſhall want your company: Therefore one thing I ſhall deſire of you, that you take this Ring of me for a remembrance. Then ſaid he, I ſhall for the love of you gladly receive your Ring; and yet I ſhall never without the Ring forget you: and ſo he committed them both to God. Then they embraced each other about the Neck, kiſſed and departed.

Not long after the Kings Son of Spain, named Guido, was received of the Emperor in the room of Alexander, to whom the Steward aſſigned Alexander's Chamber, the which was very ſore againſt the will of Lodowick, but he could not help it.

Guido ſeeing that Lodowick againſt his will, had him in his fellowſhip, he grew envious againſt him. ſo Lodowick for a long time, for fear of the ſame Guido, kept him from the company

of the Lady: nevertheless afterwards being o
vercome with her love, sometimes he went agai
unto her as before. Guido perceiving the lam
waited so long thereon, that he knew the tru
and was therefore certain that the Princes wa
by Lodowick known, and he had company with h

Upon a time it happened that the Empe
stood in the Hall, and praised Alexander for h
gentleness and wisdom. Guido hearing that, sa
my Lord, he is not so worthy to be commend
as you imagine, for he hath a long time bee
Traytor in your House. Then the Empe
said, tell me how? Guido said, You have h
one only Daughter, which shall be your he
and her, Lodowick hath defiled, through the p
of Alexander; and he goeth to her every nig
as it pleaseth him. As soon as the Emperor he
thereof, he was sore moved, and Lodowick ha
pened to come through the Hall; and as the E
peror saw him, he said, What hear I of th
thou untrue body? if it be proved, thou sh
die the most shamefullest death that can be devise
Lodowick said, my Lord, what is the cause? Gu
do answered, I deposed here before my Lord, th
thou hast defiled his only Daughter, and the
night dost Fornication with her; and with Ba
tle I shall make it good upon thy Body, with m
Body. Then said Lodowick, I am innocen
and falsly thou dost belye me, and thereupon
hold the Battle, and trust to God thy falsh
shall come upon thine own head. Then the E
pe

perour assigned them the day of Combat. That done, Lodowick went unto the Lady, and shewed her the cause, and the day of Battle, by the Emperour assigned, and in what manner Guido had accused him; and said unto her, Now it behoveth me to have your counsel, or else I must die, for you know it would not avail me to have gain-said the Battle, without I should have yielded my self guilty: Guido is hardy, that his like is none but Alexander, and I am feeble, and therefore if I fight the Battle against him, I were but a dead man; and so you shall abide rebuke. Then said she, follow my counsel, in that you mistrust your self, go hastily unto my Father, and say, ye have received Letters whereby you are assured, that the King your Father is sore sick, and lieth upon his death-bed, and he desireth to speak with you in person, and to dispose of his Kingdom before he departeth this life: so desire him to give you leave for the love of your Father, to go to visit him, and that he will prolong the day of Battle; that in the mean season you may go and come: and when you have gotten leave, as hastily as you can, secretly go to King Alexander, and take him apart, and shew him the cause of your coming, and desire him in this extremity, and he will help and save us.

When Lodowick heard this Counsel, it pleased him well, and he did according: and having obtained leave, and respite of the Battle assign-

ed, he departed towards Egypt, and never stay-
ed till he came into King Alexander's Castle.
When King Alexander understood his coming,
he was very glad, and went to meet him, re-
ceiving him honourably, and wondring much at
his coming.

Then said Lodowick, O my dear Lord, and
best beloved friend, my life and death is in your
hands; for as you said before, that I should have
another Fellow, which should lie in wait to slay
me and destroy me, without I looked more wisely
to my self: so long as I could I did abstain from
her; but afterwards the Kings Son of Spain
watched me till he perceived the truth: in the
end he accused me to the Emperor, so that on the
eighth from this day I must be ready to fight with
him body against body: and ye know he is a ve-
ry strong hardy man, and I am weak and feeble:
therefore hath Florentine counselled me, that I
should not hide this matter from you, for he
knoweth you to be a faithful friend, that will
not leave us in this necessity.

Then said Alexander, is there any that know-
eth of your coming unto me besides Florentine?
he answered him, no creature living, for I took
leave of the Emperor to go visit my Father be-
ing grievously sick. Then Alexander asked him
what counsel hath Florentine given you, and how
might I help you? he said, O my faithful friend,
thus she hath counselled me; considering that we
be like each other, you should come and perform

the Battle, and no one would know you but ſhe; and the Battle done, I would come again to the Court, and you return unto your own Country. Then he asked him, when the Battle ſhould be, and he ſaid, eight days hence.

Then ſaid Alexander, if I but one day tarry before I depart, I cannot come by the day preſixed, tell me what I ſhall do: I have bidden all my Subjects, that to morrow they ſhould come to my Wedding, and if I ſhould go, then is the day loſt; if I go not to the Battle then Florentine and you are undone: what think you is beſt? When Lodowick heard that, he fell to the earth, and began to ſorrow without meaſure, ſaying, ſorrow comes ſuddenly to me on all ſides. Then ſaid Alexander, be of good comfort, for I ſhall not forſake you, though I ſhould loſe my life and Kingdom: but hear what I have thought upon: ſeing we are both alike, ſo that the one cannot be known from the other; and as for me I am not rightly known here, but my Barons and other my Subjects will take you for me; therefore you ſhall here abide, and marry my Wife in my ſtead, and hold the Feaſts and Nuptials, and do all things as if my ſelf were preſent: but when you come to bed with my Wife look you there be true and faithful, and I ſhall without tarrying, take my Horſe, and ride where the Battle ſhall be; and if God give me victory, I will come again ſecretly, and you ſhall go again unto your beſt beloved. This done, Alexander

had Lodowick farewell, and took his journey to-
wards the Emperor's Court to fight the Battle
with Guido; and Lodowick tarried in Egypt in
stead of King Alexander.

Next morning came Lodowick, as though he
had been King Alexander, and solemnly in the
Face of the Church he espoused King Alexander's
Wife, and solemnized the Marriage Feast, with
great Royalty of Delicacies and Dainties, plenty
of all Wines, and Divers Instruments of Mu-
sick, with great joy and cheer for the Noblemen
and all others that were there assembled. And
when the night was come, he went to bed with
the Queen, and laid between him and her a naked
Sword; wherat she wondring, but saying no-
thing, and so he lay with her every night while
Alexander was gone.

Now King Alexander at the day prefixed came
unto the Emperor, and said, O most Sove-
reign Lord, I have left my Father very sick and
in hazard of death; nevertheless I am come to
perform my promise, with a full resolution to
defend my honour. The Emperor said, ye do
honourably, and according to the valour of a No-
bleman; and fortune shall favour you (I hope) in
your righteous quarrel.

And when the Emperors Daughter understood
that Alexander was come, she sent for him; and
when he came to her, she courteously embraced
him, and with great joy kissed him, and blessed
the time that she saw him again: and demand-

ed where he had left her love Lodowick? Then he declared unto her the whole circumstances, and how he had left him King in his Realm. So he took his leave of her, and went to Lodowick's Chamber, no creature thinking but that he was Lodowick, except Florentine only. The next day before Alexander went to the Battle, he said unto the Emperor in the presence of Guido, My most renowned Sovereign Lord, Guido hath falsely accused me unto your Noble Grace, in saying that I should be so familiar with the Princess your most vertuous and only Daughter, to the great dishonour of your noble person, and hers: I swear by the holy Evangelist, that she was never in any wise known by me, as he hath alledged unto you, which I shall make

good upon his body with the aid and help of God.

Then anſwered Guido, yet once I ſay again and ſwear by the Holy Evangeliſt, and by all that God hath make, that thou haſt had knowledge of and defiled the Emperors Daughter, and that I will make good upon thy head.

Whereupon they leapt upon their Courſers and ran ſo fiercely one at another, with their Spears, that they both broke and ſhivered in pieces: Then they drew their Swords, and fought ſo long, untill at laſt Alexander with great might at one ſtroak, ſmote off Guido's head, and ſent it unto the Emperors Daughter; whereof ſhe was glad, and bare it unto her Father, and ſaid, Father, behold the head of him that had ſo falſely defamed you, and me.

When the Emperor perceived the Victory, he ſent for Alexander, whom he thought to be Lodowick, and ſaid, O Lodowick, this day your honour and my daughters you have ſaved, you ſhall be to morrow in my favour, and whoſoever ſhall again defame you, ſhall for ever ſtand in my indignation.

Then anſwered Alexander: God always helpeth them that truſt in him, and revengeth wrong done to the innocent: But moſt renowned Lord one thing I intreat, that it will pleaſe you to give me leave to go ſee how it ſtandeth with my Father, whom I left ſore ſick, and if he be anything amended, I ſhall incontinently return. Then

the Emperor said, That pleaseth me; but you may in no wise leave me, for I cannot be without your presence.

Alexander having taken leave of the Emperor, with all speed he could he rode back unto his Realm. Lodowick having heard of his return, with much joy met him, and friendly received him, saying, Most true Friend of all Friends, tell me how Fortune has favoured you in this your journey and business, and to what end have you brought it? Then he said, Go to the Emperor and serve him as before, for I have gotten you more favour at his hands than you had before, and have also cut off the head of your greatest Enemy.

Then said Lodowick, you have not only at this time saved my life, but preserved me heretofore, which kindness I shall never forget, neither as yet can I requite; but God reward you, and so he departed to the Emperor's Court, and there was no man that had any knowledge of the absence of King Alexander, except Lodowick.

When night was come, he went to bed to the Queen, and as soon as he was laid, he began sweetly to embrace her, and with friendly words he kissed her. Then said she, you have made this time tedious, in that you have shewed nothing of friendship or love; how may this be? Then said he, wherefore say you that? She said every night you have laid betwixt us a naked Sword, and have never turned towards me till

now.

now. And when he heard that, he thought
the truth of his fellow, and ſaid, O my
Lady, it was not done for any ill will, but
tryal of love, But ſhe ſaid to her ſelf, that
you ſhall have no more, but deſpite, and I
be revenged upon thee.

Then there was a Knight that ſhe had a li
tle loved, and ſhe began to love him more a
more, till at the laſt they ſought how they mig
deſtroy the King; and therefore they got
ſon and poyſoned him, ſo that if he had
been of ſtrong complection, he had died there
for it wrought ſo ſore, that it cauſed him to
a moſt foul and horrible Leper, as ever was
upon the earth. The Lords and Noblemen
the ſaid Realm, and the Queen alſo ſeing
deſpi

despised him, and said, it behoveth not a Leper to reign over us, for he cannot beget any beautiful Heirs: and so he was deposed of his Dignity Royal, and driven out of his Realm.

In the mean time died the Emperor of Rome, and Lodowick married his Daughter, and after that Lodowick's Father died, so that Lodowick reigned both Emperor of Rome and King of France at once.

When King Alexander heard of that, he thought in himself, now my fellow reigneth, and ruleth both the Empire of Rome, and the Realm of France, to whom may I go better than unto him, for whom I have often ventured already, and took with him his Staff and Clapper, and went towards the Emperors Country.

And when he was come nigh the Gate, he sat down among other poor Lazars, expecting the giving of alms: and upon a sudden as the Emperor went out of the Palace, all the poor Lazars began to ring their Clappers, and good King Alexander did as the other, but there was no Alms given him, so he tarried untill the Emperor was set and served at the table.

Then went King Alexander unto the Gate, and knocked; and the Porter asked who was there? Alexander answered him, I am a poor despised man, I pray you for the love of God, turn your sight from my village, but for the reward of God do my message unto the Emperor. He asked what was the matter? Alexander said, Go

and

and tell him here is a Lazar right horrible to see, which prayeth him for the love of God and King Alexander, that he will grant him this day to eat his Alms before him upon the earth in his Hall. The Porter answered, I wonder you dare desire that of my Lord, for all the Hall is full of Lords and Noblemen, and if they should behold you, they would abhor their meat; but forasmuch as you have required it of me solemnly for the love of God, I shall do your errand, whatsoever happeneth, and so he went and did his message to the Emperor. When the Emperor heard the Porter name Alexander King of Egypt, he said to the Porter, Go thy ways and bring him before me, how horrible and ugly soever his visage be, and ordain him a place before me that he may eat in my presence.

The Porter brought him immediately, and ordained him a Place, and set him to meat before the Emperor, and when he had well refreshed himself, he said unto one of the Emperor's Servants. My dear Friend, do me this errand unto the Emperor; say unto him, that I pray him for the love of God and King Alexander, that he will send me his Cup full of Wine. The Servant said, for the love of God I will do it, but I believe it will not be; for if you should but touch my Lord's Cup he will by no means drink of the same again, nevertheless he did the errand.

And when the Emperor heard him name King Alexander, he commanded his Cup to be filled of the best Wine, and carried to him, which Wine when he had received, he put into his Bottle, and took the Ring that Lodowick had given him, and put it into the Cup, and sent it again unto the Emperor.

When the Emperor saw the Ring, he instantly knew that it was the same he had given unto King Alexander, in friendship, when he departed from him, and thought in his heart that King Alexander had bæn dead, or else that this man very strangely came by the Ring, and commanded presently that the Lazar should not depart till he had spoken with him; for in no wise could he have any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After Dinner was done, the Emperor took the sick man apart, and asked him how he came by that Ring? King Alexander demanded if he knew the Ring? The Emperor said I know it well. Alexander said, Wot you also to whom you gave it? the Emperor said, I wot right well how it is. Then said Alexander, how is it that you know not me, for I am Alexander, unto whom you gave the same. When the Emperor heard that, he fell to the ground for sorrow, and tore his Robes, and with many sighings and bewailings, said, O Alexander, you are the one half of my soul; how is your goodly and delicate body now so unclean and infected, that was so fair and pleasant to behold?

behold? He answered, this is happened unto me for the great fidelity you have done me in the b with my Wife, when you laid a naked sw betwixt you and her; wherefore she became wy and hated me, so that she and a Knight that former time she had loved, have poysoned me you see, and driven me of my Realm.

And when the Emperor heard that, he th him about the neck and kissed him, and said, my most dear and intirely beloved Brother, sorrow to see you in this great perplexity. would to God I might die for you. But most dear friend, suffer patiently a little time we have sent for all the wise Masters in Phys to have their advice, if there be any remedy to had, or hope of recovery of your health; and if be possible to help you, we shall neither sp Lordship, Empire, nor any other goods tempo to make you whole and sound.

In the mean time he was brought into a Chamber, richly furnished with all things quisite for his ease and health. Then in all h he sent Messengers through all parts of World, for the most expert Physicians th might be found, of which within a month all were assembled before the Emperor thirty, were expert and skilful in that Science; to wh the Emperor said, my well beloved Masters, have a Friend that is very grievously inflicted a foul Leprosie, whom I would very gladly be healed, and made as sound and whole as ever

was, Sparing neither for gold or silver, or any other cost whatsoever, so that he might recover his health again. Then answered the Masters, all this is possible to be done in Physick, you shall now understand after we have seen the person: and when they saw him, they knew the cause of his infirmity, and said it was incurable for all Physicians living.

When the Emperor heard that, he was right sorry, and committed it to Almighty God, calling unto him most of the Religious men that dwelt near the Court; and a number of poor people, besides many other devout persons, desiring them earnestly to make Prayers unto Almighty God, that he would vouchafe of his infinite goodness, to make whole his dear Friend King Alexander. And he himself (with many others) fasted and prayed to Almighty God for the speedy recovery of his Friend.

Now upon a time, as King Alexander was at his Prayers, there came unto him a voice from heaven, saying: Tell Lodowick the Emperor, that if he with his own hands will slay those two children which his Empress had at one burthen, and with the blood of them wash and bathe thy body, thy flesh shall become as fair and as clear as the bodies of these little Children; if not, thou shalt never look to be cured whilst breath is in thy body; and so farewell.

Now when King Alexander had heard this strange voice, he began to think with himself

what it was, and whence it came: then he replie
unto himſelf, This Viſion is not to be ſhewe
for it is contrary to humane nature, that any ma
ſhould ſlay his own Sons for the recovery of
Stranger.

The Emperor continued night and day in pra
er with great devotion, earneſtly praying to G
for King Alexander, never ceaſing until a voi
came unto him and ſaid, How long will you th
call and cry unto me? When it was openly ſhew
ed unto King Alexander, by what means he mig
recover his health, and his body become cle
without either ſpot or blemiſh.

The Emperor hearing that voice, he went
King Alexander, and ſaid unto him, O all Frien
the beſt and moſt true, bleſſed be the moſt hi
and everlaſting God, who never faileth th
that put their truſt in him, of whom I ha
knowledge, that it is ſhewed unto you, how y
may be recovered of your Leproſie; wherefor
entreat you that you will plainly lay open u
me how it may be done, for the reſtoring of y
former health, that we may have joy togeth
and if you need any thing that may do you p
I will fulfill it unto my Power; yee, and
your health give all that I have.

Alexander ſaid, Sir, I dare not ſhew you
I may be cured of my Leproſie, for it exceed
and it is a thing againſt Nature, therefore I
not as yet ſhew it you, howbeit I have a
truſt and confidence in you.

The Emperor said, Alexander put your trust in me still; whatsoever is possible to be done for recovering your health, I will do it; and therefore conceal nothing from me, I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I have of God knowledge, that if you will slay your two Sons with your own hands, and wash me in their blood, I shall be whole, therefore I have not shewed it unto you: for methinks it is against nature, that the Father should slay his own Children for the health of a stranger. The Emperor said, Say not that you are a stranger, for I love you as my self, and therefore if I had ten Children, I should not spare one for your health.

Afterwards the Emperor espied his time when the Empress was out of the way, and went into

into the Chamber where the Children slept, and drew his knife, and cut both their Throats; and gathered the Blood into a Vessel, and then bathed Alexander therewith: and when he was bathed his body was as fair and clean as though it had been a young Child. Then the Emperor had a perfect knowledge of his visage, and killed him, saying, O good Alexander, now I see you in the same form I have often times delighted in.

Blessed be Almighty God, that ever I had these Children, by whom your health is restored and your body made pure and clean. And as yet none had knowledge of the death of these Children, save the Emperor and Alexander.

And when the Emperor saw that good King Alexander was perfectly healed, he said unto him, I will ordain you an honourable company, and you shall go hence about five Miles; and the next day send me a Messenger, and let me know the day of your return. And I shall then with great solemnity come and meet you, and you shall remain with me until I may conveniently provide for the recovery of your Realm.

This Counsel pleased King Alexander well, and was performed; for on the next day following there came a Messenger to the Emperor, certifying him of the return of King Alexander.

When the Empress heard these tydings, she rejoyced and said unto the Emperor: O my best beloved Lord, have you not just cause to rejoyce, seeing Alexander King of Egypt is now coming to

ſee you, whom of long time you have not ſeen? if you pleaſe to go and meet him with your Lords and Gentlemen; I ſhall follow with my Ladies and Gentlewomen; and as yet ſhe knew not of the death of her two Children.

Then rode the Emperor and Empreſs with a great company of Lords and Ladies to meet with good King Alexander: and when they met, with great Reverence they received him, and with great joy brought him unto the Palace, and at the time of Dinner, Alexander was placed between the Emperor and Empreſs, and all the mirth and cheer that ſhe could make, ſhe ſhewed unto him.

When the Emperor ſaw that, he was glad, and ſo exceeding well pleaſed, that he ſaid, Mine own Florentine, it glads me above all things that you make unto King Alexander ſo good cheer. Then anſwered the Empreſs, wherefore ſhould I not, is not his company unto us more precious than Gold and Silver? but unto you my renowned Lord, much more, for by his means you attain'd unto ſo great honour and dignity, and by him many times you have been ſaved from death. The Emperor anſwered, Then I pray you dearly beloved Florentine, hæd my words: ſaw you not that deformed Lazar, which yeſterday ſat before our Table, and prayed me for the love of God and good King Alexander, that I would give him drink? She ſaid, my honourable Lord, I ſaw him well; a more horrible

man I never beheld. Then said the Emperor I demand of you: put the case he were King Alexander, and that he could not be made whole but with the blood of our two Sons, which you in one day brought into the world, would you that their blood should be shed, that he might bath himself therein, and therefore have perfect health, and comely favour, as you now see him have? She answered, my renowned Lord and Husband, wherefore demanded you of me that Question? I tell you of a truth, that if I had ten Sons I should gladly slay them with my own hands, to prepare for him a Bath, and would wash him therein my own self, rather than I should leave him in such a loathsom and miserable case, so horrible to behold, and in such danger of health withal; God migh send us more Children, but such a Friend were a thing impossible for us ever hereafter to find throughout the whole World.

When the Emperor heard this, he was well pleased and said, O my loving Empress, had you rather have your Children dead, then Alexander should languish in his Leprosie: Then I shall shew you the whole truth of the matter: That foul Lazar which you saw was Alexander, that sitteth here by us, and is made whole with the blood of our two Sons, and they are dead.

As soon as the Empress heard that, she began with extremity of sorrow mournfully to cry out, as nature would she should, although

ſhe had ſaid before, ſhe had rather ſee her Children dead then Alexander remain in ſuch miſery.

The Nouriſhers of the Children underſtanding this, preſently with great crying ran to the Nurſery; and great bewailing was made through the Emperors Court for his two Sons, and when the Nouriſhers came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and ſinging a Song of praiſe and thanksgiving, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, for reſtoring their lives. Then they returned with all haſt unto the Emperor and Empreſs, and ſhewed unto them how the Children were living, and that about their Throats where they were cut, they had Circles of Gold: whereof were great joy and gladneſs in all the Court, with thankſgiving to Almighty God for that exceeding great miracle and wonderful work.

After that, the Emperor with a great multitude aſſembled together, went with King Alexander into Egypt, and ſet him again in poſſeſſion of his Realm. The Queen and the Knight, who had lived long together in Adultery, he cauſed to be ſlain. And when this was done, the Emperor had one only Siſter, whom he married unto King Alexander.

When King Alexander had obtained all his Realm again, and was ſet in reſt and peace, the Emperor returned unto his Empire, and King Alexander ſo wiſely and politickly governed himſelf in his affairs, that he overcame his rebellious Enemies.

And when he was seated in his Glory, Peace, and Might, he thought upon his Father and Mother (by whom he was cast into the Sea, who dwelled in far parts) and sent a Messenger, to let them know that the King of Egypt upon such a day would be with them, to view those parts of the Country, and to sport himself, and to make a Royal Feast. When the Messenger was there come, they received him with honour, bountiful entertainments, and large gifts, and sent him back, saying, that their services should be ready at all times to do the Kings pleasure, but that they could no possible discern that he should vouchafe them that honour, whereof they were not worthy, as to visit them in those parts, to sport himself there a while.

The Messenger returned and shewed the King how willingly they would receive him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how faithful they were and ready to do him service, wherewith the King was well pleased. When the set day was come, the King with a fair company rode towards his Fathers house, who was to his Father and Mother unknown

When the King came near his Fathers Castle the Knight rode joyfully to meet him, and when he came nigh to the King he alighted, and did him reverence upon his knees: but the King took him up presently, and commanded him to take horse again, and so they rode together unto the Castle.

And

And when they were come thither, the Mother came unto him and fell upon her knæs, and welcomed him gladly; and the King took her up as lovingly and kissed her: she said unto him, My Lord, you do us (unworthy) this honour with the presence of your most honourable Personage, which we shall never be able to deserve.

After the Meat was all ready, and the time of day was come to go to Dinner, the Father came with a Bason and Ewer, and the Mother with a Towel, saying, Sir, all things are ready, pleaseth it you to wash; and when the King saw that, he smiled, and said to himself: Now is the Song of the Nightingale true, that my Father and my Mother should gladly do as I have said, if my self would thereunto consent: But he would not suffer them to do him any such service, saying, your age is to be honoured, and therefore I would have none of it; and then he called one of his Servants, whom he commanded to do that Service. Then said the Knight, you will not suffer us to do it for our Honour, because we are not worthy thereof. The King said, have I not said, that for your age I forbear you. When the King was sat at the Table, he set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left; and then as much as they might or durst, did behold his favour and countenance.

After Dinner the King entred into a fair Chamber, and made the Knight with his Lady

to

to follow him, and commanded all others to void their preſence.

When they were all alone, the King ſaid, have you no Children? They anſwered, We have neither Son nor Daughter. And the King ſaid, had you never any? the Knight anſwered, we had one Son, but he is long ago dead, the King asked of what death he died? And the Knight ſaid a natural death. Then the King ſaid, if I find it otherwiſe, you are found in a moſt horrid fault. Then asked the Knight, my moſt Honourable and Renowned Lord, wherefore enquire you ſo earneſtly after our Son? the King anſwered notwithout juſt cauſe, and therefore I muſt, and will know of what death he died: if you will not tell me I ſhall cauſe you both to die moſt ſhameful deaths.

When they heard that, they fell upon the ground on their knees before him, and asked his pardon and forgiveneſs. But the King would not ſuffer them to kneel, but took them up, and ſaid, To that intent I came not unto your houſe to eat your bread and to betray you: But ſay to me the very truth, and you ſhall be pardoned for it is given me to underſtand that you have put him to death, and if that you be found culpable therein, and come to judgment, you muſt die a moſt ſhameful death. Then ſaid the Knight, my moſt honourable Lord, ſave my life, and I will ſhew you the very truth. The King ſaid, fear not for I ſhall do you no harm. Then anſwered the Knight, and ſaid, Moſt dread Sovereign Lord

we had a Son, that was wise, learned, and intelligent: and upon a time as he stood before us, and served at the Table, there came to the Window a Nightingale that sung exceeding sweetly, whose Song he began to interpret, and to tell us what it meant, and said, this Bird singeth, that I shall become so great and mighty a Lord that you my Father shall be glad to hold a Bason with water to wash my hands, and my Mother a Towel, that if I will suffer it.

And when I heard that, I was sore moved, and vexed in my mind; and so I took him upon my shoulder, and cast him into the Sea for to drown him. Then said the King, what evill had come to you, if he had been made he so great? Methinks it should have been for your honour and profit. The Knight said, my Renowned Lord, it was for no Reason, but Woodness. The King answered, 'twas a great folly in you, that you would do against the Ordinance of God. And now you shall know for truth, I am your Son that you cast into the Sea, and God of his great mercy hath saved me, and by his Grace brought me to this estate and dignity.

The Father and Mother hearing that, with fear and joy amazed, fell flat unto the Ground; whom he lovingly took up, saying, fear not, but rather rejoyce, for you shall suffer no harm: but my exaltation shall be to your glory and profit: and so he kiss his Father and Mother with great joy. Then began the Mother to weep greatly;

greatly; and the King said to her, leave off your sorrowing, and be of good cheer, for in my Realm you shall be honoured above me during my life: and he took them with him into his Kingdom, where they dwelled a long time in honour and joy and ended their days with comfort and love of all the People.

Here follows the Application of the Example to the purpose.

Then said Diocletian the Emperors Son, Lord have you understood what I have said; The Emperor said, right well: then said the Son, my most honoured and redoubted Father, although that God hath given and endued me with wisdom and understanding above others, that shall not be an impairing of your honour and might, but more for the preservation and maintenence of the same: so in like manner, the Kings excellent Majesty, which was nothing to the hindrance of the Father, but this rather for his worship, profit, and greater comfort. For as long as they lived, it was in very great joy and mirth, that they were loved of the People and honoured of the Kingdom. Then said the Emperor, my beloved Son, I will wholly resign all the Empire unto you to govern and rule: for I perceive well by your Narration that you have to me declared, that it is best for me, and most for my ease, that I now leave this worldly and tedious business, and the labour and care of a King, and betake me

me to my reſt and eaſe, for I am old and feeble. Then anſwered the Son, and ſaid unto his Father, My moſt honourable Lord and Father, ſo ſhall it be, but as long as you live, you ſhall have the Authority and Government of the Empire at your command, as it appertaineth unto an Emperor; but in all the buſineſſes that are laborious and troubleſome, I will always be ready to miniſter any ſervice that poſſible I can, according to my bounded Duty.

How Judgment was given upon the Empreſs, and how that ſhe and her Lover were both put to death.

Then the Emperor commanded the Judges and Juſtices to ſit in Judgment, and to bring again the Empreſs before them, with the Ladies, and alſo the Ribauld, her beſt beloved, cloathed in the veſture and habit of a woman, whom he did cauſe to ſtand next unto the Empreſs: then the Emperor's Son asked Sentence and juſt judgment upon them; ſaying My moſt honourable Lord and Father, even as you are Emperor of the World, and that your Majeſty and Power requireth to do true juſtice unto all your Subjects that deſire it: ſo now I demand, that you this day do give right ſentence and true judgment upon the untruth, falſhood, and ſhame, which were put and alledged unto me by the Empreſs; for the which accuſations, I have been

ſome-

sometimes led unto the Gallows, and have stood in great jeopardy, and peril of my life, and all that she hath bæn to you untrue of her body, as you have sæn by good proof made before you: and on the which I ask judgment: and therefore command your Justices and Judges to give sentence thereupon, according to Right, Equity and Law.

As soon as the Empress heard this, she fell flat to the earth before the Emperor, and asked mercy and forgivenels for her just offence and mildoing: but it helped nor profited nothing, for the Son would have right, and desired Judgment. Then spake the Judges and Justices, Her own mildæds condemn her, and the report of her Leman by her kept and found: therefore we give Sentence against the Empress that she shall be bound to a Horses Tail, and drawn through all the Stræts of the City to the place of Execution, and there be burnt. We judge and give sentence against the Ribauld, that he shall be quartered and smitten in pieces, and his flesh cast to the Hounds and Birds of the air to devour him: and this Sentence was approbated and allowed of by the people.

Hereafter in short time died the Emperor, and Diocleſian his Son governed and ruled the Empire with great wildom, and always held and kept his Masters with him in great honour and Glory. By whose counsel and wildom he governed the Empire; and he excelled all his Pre-

cellors

cellors in Riches, and doing Right and Juſtice: and his Maſters ſo loved him above all others in the World, that many times they put themſelves in great peril and jeopardy of their lives for him. And ſo ended their days in joy and honour to the praiſe of Almighty GOD.

FINIS.

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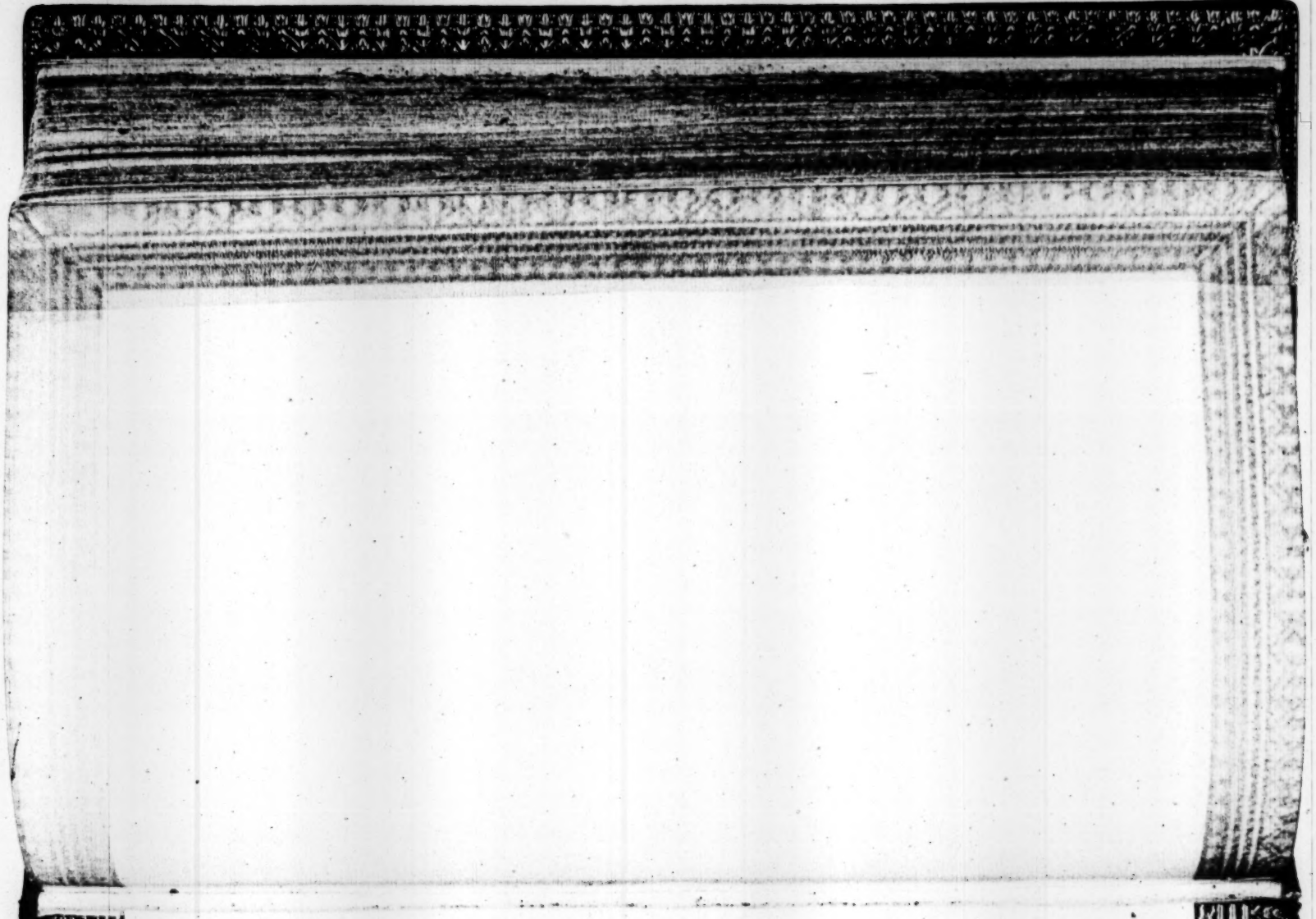

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